

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
BURNS DISTRICT**

**SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS
OF THE MANAGEMENT SITUATION**

**ANDREWS MANAGEMENT UNIT/STEENS MOUNTAIN
COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION
AREA RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**Prepared by the
Bureau of Land Management
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SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE MANAGEMENT SITUATION ANDREWS/STEENS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

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1 INTRODUCTION

The similarities between the subbasin review process and the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) process are shown in Table 1.1. The AMS is Step 4 in the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) nine-step land use planning process and ultimately results in a Resource Management Plan (RMP). The Burns District Office (Burns DO) of the BLM has initiated the preparation of an RMP for the Planning Area. Figure 1.1 shows the Planning Area boundary relative to other geographic features. The Planning Area encompasses the entire Andrews Resource Area (RA) and the portion of the Three Rivers RA within the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area (CMPA). The Steens Mountain CMPA is the area identified in the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 (Act) and is described below. The Section of the Planning Area outside of the Steens Mountain CMPA is identified as the Andrews Management Unit (MU).

In addition to the RMP, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be prepared to analyze the alternatives as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The overall objective of the RMP planning effort is to promote a collaborative planning approach to assist the BLM in updating existing management decisions and resource allocations by addressing new data, changing resource conditions, and changes in public land use that have occurred since the Andrews Management Framework Plan (MFP) was completed in 1982.

On October 30, 2000, the Act was signed into law. The Act designated 425,550 of BLM managed acres as the Steens Mountain CMPA, which includes 53,427 acres in the Three Rivers RA and the approximately 170,000 acre Steens Mountain Wilderness Area of which 97,671 acres were designated as a No Livestock Grazing Area. In addition, the Act also designated three new Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSRs) and expanded the existing WSR. The Act also designated a 900,000 acre Mineral Withdrawal Area, which encompasses the entire Steens Mountain CMPA and a portion of the Andrews MU, as well as portions of the Malheur RA (BLM Vale District) and the Three Rivers RA. The Act also created the Redband Trout Reserve (RTR), the Wildlands Juniper Management Area (WJMA) and the Steens Mountain Advisory Council (SMAC).

In 1995, preparation of the Southeast Oregon Resource Management Plan (SEORMP) was initiated by the BLM Vale and Burns DOs. The SEORMP initially included the Andrews RA. As a result of the Act,

however, the Burns DO determined it was appropriate to separate the Andrews RA from the SEORMP and develop a separate RMP for the Planning Area in order to address changes in land management resulting from directives of the Act.

1.1 Description of the Analysis of Management Situation and Subbasin Review

The AMS is a crucial step in the BLM's land use planning process, which guides the preparation of a RMP/EIS. The AMS assesses the condition of the various resources on public lands as well as the current management situation, the physical and biological characteristics, and the capability of the resources.

The subbasin review originated with the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Plan (ICBEMP) that was established in 1994 to develop and then adopt a scientifically sound, ecosystem based strategy for managing all U.S. Forest Service (USFS) or BLM administered lands within the interior Columbia Basin. The ICBEMP covers an area of 145 million acres, 53 percent of which is federal land managed by the BLM or the USFS. The size of this area required a strategy to bring findings and information down to a level where they could be applied in a USFS or BLM management unit such as a ranger district or resource area. The subbasin review process was developed whereby pertinent information could be "stepped down" to the local management level. In this document the subbasin review covers the Planning Area.

The ICBEMP area was divided for analysis and review purposes into four geographic scales: broad-scale (interior Columbia Basin), mid-scale (subbasins or groups of subbasins), fine-scale (watershed), and site scale (project). The mid-scale or subbasin level is the level at which field offices would undertake long range planning for all resources within their respective administrative boundaries. The subbasins are based on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 4th field hydrologic unit codes (HUCs). On average, these 4th field HUCs comprise an area of 500,000 to 1,000,000 acres. The Planning Area subbasin review area includes six subbasins identified in the ICBEMP scientific assessment: Guano, Harney/Malheur Lakes, Alvord Lake, Donner und Blitzen, Thousand-Virgin, and Crooked-Rattlesnake, comprising an area of approximately 2,177,810 acres. Land ownership and

Table 1.1: Steps in the Subbasin Review and Analysis of Management Situation

Subbasin Review		Analysis of the Management Situation	
<u>Step</u>		<u>Step</u>	
1.	Prepare for the Review	1.	Collect and Consolidate Data
2.	Identify Mid-scale Issues	2.	Conduct Internal and Public Scoping
3.	Describe Mid-scale Character (Describe character of the review area in relationship to the issues)	3.	Resource Area Profile (Describe the condition of the resource area, including its physical, biological and human environment)
	No step in subbasin review corresponds to Existing Management Situation of the AMS	4.	Existing Management Situation (Describe for each resource its current uses, production, or protection problems and the management practices and direction)
4.	Develop recommendations and integrated priority setting (Develop recommended actions and determine urgency and timing of actions)	5.	Identify Management Opportunities (Identify and evaluate all reasonable opportunities and/or actions to address the planning issues and management concerns)
5.	Subbasin Review Report (Document the subbasin review results and the process. Provide information for further planning)	6.	Prepare the AMS (Develop a comprehensive document for use by the BLM and a summary document for public distribution. Provide information for RMP/EIS)

administrative responsibilities include private (including county) land, State of Oregon lands, BLM administered lands, and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) managed lands. The majority of the land in the subbasin review area is administered by the BLM, Burns DO. Table 1.2 defines land ownership and administration in the Planning Area. All acreage numbers utilized in this document were derived utilizing Geographic Information System (GIS) technology and are not considered legal acreage numbers.

The subbasin review (Chapter 6) is an intergovernmental process in which mid- and fine-scale information is tiered to ICBEMP goals, objectives, and standards. It is a mid-scale look at ecosystem processes and functions. The review is designed to bridge the gap between the region-wide, broad-scale information derived from ICBEMP and the actual on-the-ground management actions. Subbasin review is a review of mid-scale issues to identify and set priorities for doing more detailed mid- and fine-scaled analysis. It is not a decision-making process, but rather a stage-setting process. Outcomes from the review do not constitute a stand-alone planning process; rather, the review is an integrated effort that supports other existing planning

and assessment processes, thus leading to the decision to incorporate the subbasin review into the AMS.

Four areas are addressed in this combined AMS/subbasin review: 1) the subbasin review area, 2) the Planning Area, 3) the Steens Mountain CMPA, and 4) the Andrews MU. The RMP will address management decisions relative to BLM administered lands in the Planning Area. See Table 1.2 for land ownership and administration. For this Summary AMS, the Andrews MU has been combined with the Steens Mountain CMPA and is referred to as the Planning Area.

1.2 Analysis of the Management Situation and Subbasin Review Process

During the resource management planning process, the BLM will set priorities for acting on recommendations and opportunities. Emphasis will be placed on opportunities for protecting and managing special areas such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern; opportunities for management of resources across administrative boundaries such as watersheds, aquatic

Table 1.2: Land Ownership and Administration in the Planning Area

Land Ownership/Administration	Acres
BLM	1,649,467
USFWS	26,677
State of Oregon	7,647
Private (includes county land)	494,019
TOTAL	2,177,810

species, and noxious weeds; and opportunities for control of juniper expansion. BLM staff incorporated the descriptions of the mid-scale character and the recommendations into the Resource Area Profile (RAP), Chapter 2, and Management Opportunities, Chapter 4, of the AMS, respectively.

1.3 Organization of Document

The Introduction, Chapter 1, is followed by the RAP (Subbasin Characterization), Chapter 2, which describes the current characteristics of the Planning Area. Chapter 3 describes the Existing Management Situation within the Planning Area and outlines the current management direction provided in the Andrews MFP, the Act, the Interim Management Policy (IMP) for the Steens Mountain CMPA, and other documented management decisions. In addition, BLM/federal management directives, activity-level plans and other guidance documents are listed in this chapter. Chapter 4 is Management Opportunities (Recommendations and Integrated Priorities), which identifies the management opportunities and develops recommendations. Identification of potential management opportunities is step five in developing the AMS. Development of recommendations and determination of integrated priorities serve as step four of the subbasin review process. Legal Mandates, Planning Criteria, and Proposed Alternatives are described in Chapter 5. This chapter outlines the mandates to which the RMP/EIS must adhere, and discusses the Planning Criteria which will guide the preparation of the RMP/EIS. In addition, it describes the preliminary alternatives that have been developed in the planning process. Chapter 6 is the Subbasin Review Report, which outlines the mid-scale issues identified by the BLM as well as the broad-scale issues identified during the ICBEMP process, and presents the determination on the applicability of these issues to the Planning Area. Chapters 7 through 11 consist of the List of Preparers, the Planning Process, the Abbreviations and Acronyms, the Glossary, and the References.

This document includes three sections which will feed directly into the RMP/EIS. First, the RAP, which describes the existing physical, biological, and human environment of the Planning Area and equates to the Affected Environment section of the RMP/EIS. Second, the Existing Management Situation which describes (for each resource) the current uses, production or protection problems, and managerial practices and direction from previous planning documents, leading to the No Action Alternative of the RMP/EIS. The third section is the Management Opportunities section, which identifies and evaluates all reasonable opportunities to address the planning issues and management concerns, and is the basis for developing alternatives for the RMP/EIS.

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2 RESOURCE AREA PROFILE (SUBBASIN CHARACTERIZATION)

2.1 Introduction

The RAP, Step 3 of the AMS process, describes the current condition, amount, location, use, demands, etc. of each of the resources in the Planning Area. This is a summary of that information. The complete profiles will be used as the basis of the affected environment section of the RMP/EIS. This information also serves as the summary of the subbasin characterization, which is also Step 3 of the Subbasin Review Process (Chapter 6). The descriptions of the mid-scale character apply to findings related to watershed, renewable resources (such as vegetation, forestry and wildlife), fire management, and human uses and values resources addressed by the ICBEMP scientific assessments (USFS and BLM 1996; Quigley et al. 1996).

The following is a description of the resources in the Planning Area:

2.2 Air Quality

Under criteria established through the Clean Air Act as amended in 1990, the Planning Area has been designated as Class II. This means that air quality is good to excellent; however, the potential to impact Class I air sheds (i.e., Strawberry Mountain Wilderness), does exist and additional measures will be required to avoid those impacts. Strawberry Mountain Wilderness, 65 miles northeast of the Planning Area, is the closest Class I air shed. The nearest Non-Attainment Area is Lakeview, Oregon. The air pollutant of most concern on BLM administered land is particulate matter, which may originate from fire, road or windblown dust, and vehicle use. Most of this particulate matter is produced from fire, and is less than ten microns in diameter (called PM₁₀).

2.3 Soils

The Planning Area was covered by an Order III soil survey completed in 1994 for the Harney County Area by the National Cooperative Soil Survey.

Soils in semiarid southeastern Oregon are young and poorly developed. Chemical and biological soil-building processes such as rock weathering, decomposition of plant materials, accumulation of organic matter, and nutrient cycling proceed slowly in this environment. Since soil recovery processes are also slow, disruption of soils can lead to long-term changes in ecological condition and productivity. In many areas,

natural or geologic erosion happens too rapidly for distinct, deep soil horizons to develop.

2.4 Vegetation

The Basin and Range Province in Oregon is dominated by sagebrush/native bunchgrass communities. Sagebrush species growth is site specific. Basin big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *tridentata*) grows mainly on sites having moderately deep loamy soils such as droughty bottomlands and fans. Wyoming big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *Wyomingensis*) is present almost everywhere throughout the lower elevations of the province on slightly sandy or gravelly soils. Mountain big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* ssp. *vasseyana*) occurs in similar soils, but at higher elevations. Low sagebrush/bunchgrass communities are strongly dominant on shallow to very shallow stony upland lithic soils. Stiff sagebrush/bunchgrass communities dominate on shallow soils that are either stony or clayey. Silver sagebrush (*Artemisia cana*) dominates internally drained basins with seasonally saturated soils. Black sagebrush/bunchgrass communities are found on shallow soils with a calcareous layer. Perennial grassland communities do not form a major climax vegetation type, although they do dominate for a period following fire when the shrub component is eliminated. Although western juniper generally occurs as a vegetation type in many woodland communities, it has also invaded big sagebrush/bunchgrass and low sagebrush/bunchgrass communities on mesic sites where it has not been limited by wildland fires.

2.5 Special Status Plant Species

Approximately 83 special status plant species occur in the Planning Area. Nearly all of the plants on the list are rare in Oregon, but common or stable in areas outside of Oregon. Special status plant species occur in a variety of plant associations and on a variety of physical habitats, many of which have distinct soil types. Special status plant surveys are made prior to land exchanges, range and wildlife projects, proposed mining operations, and other surface disturbing activities.

2.6 Noxious Weeds

Noxious weeds are present throughout the subbasin review area. These weeds have become established in the Planning Area primarily because of vehicle use on existing roads. The weed control program is dynamic, due to new weed introduction and the ongoing implementation of varied control methods. Grazing and fire management, as well as chemical, mechanical, and biological control methods are used as part of an integrated weed management program. These methods are, of course, subject to site-specific determination of appropriate techniques. The BLM monitors, on an annual basis, the changes in distribution and new introductions of noxious weeds.

2.7 Riparian Resources

Riparian areas are water-dependent ecosystems bordering streams, rivers, and wetlands. They form ecological links between the terrestrial and aquatic components of the landscape. Riparian landforms (ie. flood plains), and vegetation and/or other structural components, such as woody debris and boulders, dissipate stream energy or wave action (standing water) during high water events and reduce erosion. Detention and storage of high flows reduce flood risks and contribute inflow during periods of receding water surface elevation or flow. Reduced bank erosion contributes to maintenance of water quality and general riparian integrity. Riparian communities tend to be more diverse than surrounding upland communities and support a greater variety of wildlife species. The habitat islands provided by springs are especially important in high desert ecosystems. Functional riparian systems maintain stream channel stability and facilitate a variety of environmental, social, and economic values, such as clean water, fish and wildlife habitat, livestock forage, and scenic quality.

Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) assessments have been conducted almost exclusively along perennial streams in the Planning Area.

The PFC Assessment for the streams surveyed in the Andrews MU are as follows: 67 percent PFC, 26 percent Functioning at Risk (FAR) and seven percent nonfunctioning. The approximate PFC Assessment for the streams surveyed in the Steens Mountain CMPA are as follows: 75 percent PFC, 23 percent FAR and two percent nonfunctioning.

2.8 Grazing Management

The Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (BLM 1997a) provide the basis for assessing rangeland conditions and trends. Specific types of field indicators of rangeland health are identified for each standard. The quantitative thresholds for these indicators vary according to soil, climate, and landform, as stated in the standards.

Thirty-five permittees are authorized to graze livestock on 72 allotments in the Planning Area. Allotment boundaries are illustrated on Figure 2.1.

Livestock grazing will continue in the Steens Mountain CMPA where allowed under the Act and will conform to applicable laws, policy, and BLM regulations. The No Livestock Grazing Area (97,671 acres) designated by the Act altered the previous pattern of use through land exchanges and amendments to individual allotments and created the first Congressionally designated cattle free wilderness of its kind. Land exchanges conducted to meet the mandates of the Act necessitated allotment boundary changes, revisions to Animal Unit Months (AUMs) and several rangeland improvement projects.

In order to implement the No Livestock Grazing Area created by the Act, the BLM retired grazing permits in whole or part, constructed protective fencing, and constructed fences and water developments to provide for the replacement forage designated in the Act. All or a portion of 27 allotments are located in the Steens Mountain CMPA, and are operated by 17 permittees.

2.9 Animal Damage Control

Animal damage control is an activity of the USDA-Agricultural Plant and Animal Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The roles and responsibilities of the BLM and USDA-APHIS are specified under a National Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the BLM and USDA-APHIS which was signed on March 21, 1995. Areas of animal damage control activity are identified to the BLM on an annual basis.

2.10 Water Resources

The Planning Area contains portions or all of six subbasins: Guano, Harney/Malheur Lakes, Alvord Lake, Donner und Blitzen, Thousand-Virgin, and Crooked-Rattlesnake. The hydrographic subbasins are displayed on Figure 2.2. Table 2.1 and 2.2 describe the major subbasins in the Andrews MU and the Steens Mountain CMPA, respectively.

The primary surface water beneficial uses are domestic water supply, fisheries, irrigation, livestock watering, wildlife, hunting, fishing, recreation, and aesthetics. Most streams in the Planning Area support the state designated beneficial uses.

The regional ground water gradients and extensive aquifer systems within the Planning Area have not been studied.

2.11 Fisheries

Six of the twelve native fish populations have distributions that are restricted to the Planning Area for a major portion of their range (Catlow Valley redband trout, Great Basin redband trout, Malheur mottled sculpin, Borax Lake chub, Catlow Valley tui chub, Alvord chub).

Nonnative trout and sunfish have been introduced to the Planning Area. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) periodically stocks hatchery rainbow trout in three reservoirs in the Planning Area.

The Lahontan cutthroat trout, historically native to the nearby Lahontan basin, was introduced to several streams in the Alvord Basin in the 1970s. Several populations are now self-sustaining.

Two fish found in the Planning Area are listed as threatened or endangered by both the State of Oregon and the federal government (Lahontan cutthroat and Borax chub).

2.12 Wildlife

As a public land administrator in Oregon, the BLM is responsible for managing a wide array of habitats used by native and introduced wildlife species. The ODFW is responsible for managing animal populations. Management programs designed to benefit wildlife consider both population and habitat.

The Planning Area provides diverse habitat including sagebrush steppe, riparian and wetland, and juniper woodlands. Wildlife species utilizing the habitat include upland game bird species, Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, California bighorn sheep, cougars, raptors, waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, neotropical migrants, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates.

2.13 Special Status Animal Species

Special status animal species occur on public land within the Planning Area. Special status designations are assigned for various reasons including limited distribution, habitat loss resulting from environmental impacts, suspected or documented population declines, or some combination of these factors.

2.14 Wild Horses

The Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act (PL 92-195) states: "It is the policy of Congress that wild free-roaming horses and burros shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment, or death; and to accomplish this they are to be considered in the area where presently found as an integral part of the Public Lands." After passage of this act in 1971, the Planning Area was inventoried for free-roaming horses and burros. Six areas in the Planning Area were designated as Herd Areas (HAs) containing wild horses. No burros were found in these areas.

Previous land use plans established Appropriate Management Levels (AMLs) (Table 2.3) within each herd management area (HMA) to maintain public land resources, including wild horse habitat, in a satisfactory condition and to minimize unacceptable impacts to these resources. To prevent resource overuse and to maintain a thriving ecological balance, gathering takes place as a herd reaches the maximum number in the established AML range, and when monitoring data indicate that an excess number of horses exists. Horse populations are usually reduced to the minimum number of the AML range.

2.15 Fire Management

The Planning Area has a wide variety of plant communities with varied fire histories. The Planning Area averages about 15 wildland fires per year. Approximately 90 percent of the fires are caused by lightning and about ten percent are caused by humans. In 2001, the Planning Area had 32 fires, which burned approximately 21,000 acres.

The Planning Area fire management strategy focuses on wildland fire suppression and prescribed fire. The wildland fire season generally runs from mid-May through mid-September, while prescribed fires are usually planned for periods before and after the

Table 2.1: Major Subbasins in the Andrews MU

Subbasin	HUC	Total Acres ¹	USFWS	State Acres	Private Acres	AMU BLM Acres	AMU Stream Miles ²
Guano	17120008	625,014	0	658	271,813	352,544	1,061
Harney/Malheur Lakes	17120001	2,567	0	0	14	2,553	5
Alvord Lake	17120009	748,442	0	5,595	117,946	624,901	2,258
Donner und Blitzen	17120003	86,405	26,677	30	35,011	24,688	284
Thousand-Virgin	16040205	171,333	0	0	2,055	169,278	597
Crooked-Rattlesnake	17050109	45,071	0	0	0	45,071	219
Total		1,678,832	26,677	6,283	426,839	1,219,035	4,424

¹ The total acres value covers the subbasin area within the Andrews MU.

² The stream miles include all perennial, intermittent and ephemeral streams within the Planning Area (excluding the Steens Mountain CMPA). There are approximately 430 miles of perennial streams in the Planning Area.

Table 2.2 : Major Subbasins of the Steens Mountain CMPA

Subbasin	HUC	Total Acres ¹	State Acres	Private Acres	CMPA BLM Acres ²	CMPA Stream Miles ³
Guano	17120008	73,679	0	2,839	70,840	189
Harney/Malheur Lakes	17120001	22,910	0	4,725	18,185	59
Alvord Lake	17120009	125,901	433	5,792	119,675	382
Donner und Blitzen	17120003	270,694	637	53,231	216,825	707
Total		493,184	1,070	66,587	425,525	1,337

¹ The total acres value covers the subbasin area within the Steens Mountain CMPA.

² The stream miles include all perennial, intermittent and ephemeral streams within the Steens Mountain CMPA boundary. There are approximately 371 miles of perennial streams in the Steens Mountain CMPA.

Table 2.3: Herd Management Areas in the Andrews MU and Steens Mountain CMPA

HMA	BLM Total HMA Acres	BLM Acres in AMU	BLM Acres in CMPA	AML Range	Forage Allocation (AUMs)
Alvord/Tule Springs	343,201	343,201	0	73 to 140	1,680
Heath Creek/Sheepshead	62,427	54,599	7,828	61 to 102	408
Kiger	38,359	0	6,531	51 to 82	984
Riddle Mountain	32,653	0	25,328	33 to 56	672
South Steens	127,838	4,213	123,625	159 to 304	3,648
Total	604,478	402,013	163,312		7,392

wildland fire season, depending on weather conditions. Prescribed burning can be used to meet resource and fire management objectives such as stimulation of plant growth, changes in species composition, or reduction in amounts of fuels and slash.

The Burns DO is currently using a combination of prescribed fire and mechanical treatment to enhance and rejuvenate mountain big sagebrush and quaking aspen.

2.16 Woodlands

In the Planning Area, juniper woodlands cover approximately 200,000 acres. Juniper is found primarily in the Steens Mountain area between 5,700 to 6,560 feet in elevation, with some occurring up to 7,000 feet.

Additional information is needed to address the various challenges of juniper management. Gathering this information is one component of the WJMA created within the Steens Mountain CMPA. The WJMA, consisting of 3,267 acres of public land, will be used for experimentation, education, interpretation, and demonstration of management techniques for restoring historic fire regime and native vegetation communities.

Quaking aspen occurs in areas of locally high soil moisture including riparian zones, seasonally wet areas, and groundwater seeps. In the Planning Area, quaking aspen is found on the Pueblo and Trout Creek Mountains, and Steens Mountain at elevations of 6,400 to 7,900 feet. The distribution of quaking aspen has decreased over the past 100 to 200 years in the Planning Area, as in other parts of eastern Oregon. This decline has been attributed to overbrowsing by livestock and wildlife, loss of suitable habitat due to lowering of water tables, and possibly a reduction in fire frequency (Crowe 1996).

2.17 Special Management Areas

Several Special Management Areas (SMAs) are located in the Planning Area (Figure 2.3). These areas have special values which warrant or require special management or protection and are, therefore, specifically addressed through the BLM planning process.

Seven Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), four of which are RNAs, are located in the Andrews MU. These ACECs were designated to provide special management and protection to areas with special characteristics such as diverse ecosystems, landforms, plant communities, and critical wildlife habitat. The areas include Alvord Desert ACEC, Borax Lake ACEC, Pickett Rim ACEC, Mickey Basin Research Natural Area (RNA), Pueblo Foothills RNA, Tumtum Lake RNA, and Long Draw RNA.

Eight ACECs, five of which are RNAs, are located in the Steens Mountain CMPA. These ACECs were designated to provide special management and protection to areas with critical wildlife and wild horse habitat, scenic qualities, and unique plant communities. The areas include Kiger ACEC, Alvord Peak ACEC,

Steens Mountain ACEC, Little Wildhorse Lake RNA, Little Blitzen RNA, South Fork Willow Creek RNA, Rooster Comb RNA, and East Kiger Plateau RNA.

The Donner und Blitzen WSR was designated in October 1988 when Congress passed the "Omnibus Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1988"; the management plan was completed in 1993. The Donner und Blitzen WSR is located entirely within the Steens Mountain CMPA and is made up of the following streams; Donner und Blitzen River, Fish Creek, Little Blitzen River, Big Indian Creek, Little Indian Creek, and South Fork Donner und Blitzen River. In 2000, the Act increased the WSR system by adding segments to the Donner und Blitzen WSR and designating new WSRs. The newly designated WSR segments are Kiger Creek (4.25 miles), Wildhorse Creek (7.36 miles), and Little Wildhorse Creek (2.60 miles); the additional segments to be included in Donner und Blitzen WSR are Ankle Creek (8.10 miles), South Fork of Ankle Creek (1.60 miles), and Mud Creek (5.10 miles). These additions provide a total of 101.7 miles of WSR within the Steens Mountain CMPA.

2.18 Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas

Public lands were inventoried in the early 1980s to see if they contained wilderness characteristics. Those areas found to have wilderness characteristics were identified as WSAs and all other land was eliminated from further consideration in the wilderness review.

In October of 2000, Congress passed the Act, which designated the 170,024-acre Steens Mountain Wilderness Area in the Steens Mountain CMPA and expanded the Basque Hills Wilderness Study Area (WSA) with a 3,840-acre addition in the Andrews MU. In addition, the Act modified some of the WSAs in the Steens Mountain CMPA and created a No Livestock Grazing Area consisting of 97,671 acres within the Steens Mountain Wilderness.

Until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations or otherwise releases the existing WSAs for other purposes, they will continue to be managed in accordance with the BLM's Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and other applicable laws and policies. As shown in Table 2.4, 16 WSAs are in the Andrews MU, ranging from approximately 8,500 acres to 236,000 acres.

All or portions of seven WSAs are located within the Steens Mountain CMPA (see Table 2.5). The WSAs include Blitzen River, Bridge Creek, Home Creek,

Lower Stonehouse, South Fork Donner und Blitzen, Stonehouse, and High Steens.

2.19 Recreation

Sightseeing, driving for pleasure, fishing, and hunting are among the most popular types of dispersed recreation. Non-motorized boating, horseback riding, camping, hiking, wildlife viewing and off-highway vehicle (OHV) use are also popular activities in the Planning Area.

Dispersed recreation opportunities exist throughout the entire Planning Area. Opportunities for developed recreation exist at several sites within the Planning Area. The Lakeview to Steens Back Country Byway provides access to recreation opportunities in the Planning Area.

Table 2.4: Wilderness Study Areas in the Andrews MU

Wilderness Study Area	Acres
Alvord Desert	97,760
Basque Hills	72,082
Disaster Peak	3,672
East Alvord	22,161
Hawk Mountain	24,226
Heath Lake	21,197
Mahogany Ridge	27,053
Pueblo Mountains	73,547
Red Mountain	15,659
Rincon	104,979
Sheepshead Mountains	21,679
Table Mountain	39,886
West Peak	8,598
Wildcat Canyon	8,543
Willow Creek	2,424
Winter Range	15,517
Total	558,983

Table 2.5: Wilderness Study Areas Located within the Steens Mountain CMPA

Wilderness Study Area	Acres
Blitzen River	31,737
Bridge Creek	14,284
High Steens	13,227
Home Creek	1,165
Lower Stonehouse	7,449
South Fork Donner und Blitzen	27,969
Stonehouse	22,765
Total	118,596

The High Desert Trail, a component of the National Recreation Trails System, begins at Denio Canyon near the Nevada border south of Fields, Oregon, and is 240 miles long.

Trails that exist in the Steens Mountain CMPA include Wildhorse Lake, Little Blitzen Gorge, Big Indian Gorge, Steens Summit and Blitzen River “fishing path”. Trails are generally open from June to late October.

OHV use is frequently associated with hunting, fishing, and driving for pleasure and also occurs for administrative purposes such as management of livestock and maintenance of range projects. All public land in the Planning Area is designated as either open, limited, or closed with regard to vehicle use.

Four developed campgrounds in the Steens Mountain CMPA are Page Springs, Fish Lake, Jackman Park, and South Steens. The developed campgrounds include amenities such as picnic tables, drinking water, fire rings and vault toilets. In addition, there are campground amenities provided specifically for equestrian use at South Steens and a boat ramp and fishing platform at Fish Lake. A primitive campground is located at Mann Lake and additional primitive camping is allowed throughout the Planning Area.

Motorized winter use in the Steens is allowed along the north section of the Steens Mountain Back Country Byway. During winter, the gates allowing access are locked. A permit and key must be obtained from the BLM for use by winter recreationists wanting to drive to the snow line on the Back Country Byway.

2.20 Visual Resources

The FLPMA requires the BLM to consider the effects of management actions on the visual quality of the landscape. To protect visual resources, all public land is inventoried to determine its Visual Resource Management (VRM) classification.

All WSAs in the Planning Area and Steens Mountain Wilderness are Class I. The western portion of the Planning Area is class IV. The area near the road from Frenchglen, through Fields, to Denio is primarily class III, with some adjacent areas considered as Class IV. The Steens Mountain CMPA is primarily managed as Class I, except for the northwestern portion north of the Steens Mountain Back Country Byway, which is Class II and Class IV.

2.21 Human Uses and Values

The Planning Area encompasses a large segment of southern Harney County and a portion of southwestern Malheur County. The Steens Mountain CMPA lies entirely within Harney County. Part of the Mineral Withdrawal Area lies within Malheur County and the Vale District’s Jordan RA; however, the effects of the withdrawal in that region have been addressed in the SEORMP. To effectively compile an economic profile of the subbasin review area, Harney and Malheur Counties were selected as the analysis unit. The Steens Mountain CMPA is not separated out but is included in the assessment of Harney County within the Harney/Malheur study area.

The primary economic center of Harney County includes the cities of Burns and Hines, which are located 290 miles from Portland in Southeastern Oregon.

Several smaller communities are located within the Planning Area, including Frenchglen and Fields.

The ICBEMP examined the Harney and Malheur County areas generally and the communities of Ontario, Burns, and Hines specifically. Smaller unincorporated communities were not examined. The Draft Eastside EIS concludes that Harney County, located in the Boise trade center, is an area of low economic and social resiliency. This determination is based on the county's dependence on public land, timber, and forage and the fact that 21 percent of the county budget is derived from federal land payments (ICBEMP May 1997).

Harney and Malheur Counties are among Oregon's least populated counties. Except for Ontario, Burns, Hines, and a few other "urban" centers, the two counties are primarily rural in character. The population of Harney County was 7,609 in 2000. The population in Malheur was 31,615. Harney County has limited ethnic diversity with small populations of Hispanic and Native American residents.

The Burns-Paiute Tribe has a small reservation in Harney County, located near Burns. The tribe was established by Executive Order instead of by treaty and has no reserved treaty rights (Hanes 1999).

In 1998, an estimated 3,680 people were employed in Harney County. This includes 870 self-employed persons. Wage and salary workers were more common, totaling 2,810. Significant changes in employment numbers since 1998 have been noted. Updated figures will be provided in the RMP.

Federal, state, and local governments employed the greatest number of people at 1,020 (State of Oregon, Employment Department, various years). During fiscal year 1995, federal natural resource agencies in Harney County employed 60 people at the BLM and 74 at the Forest Service (ICBEMP February 1998).

The per capita personal income in Harney County was \$21,173 in 1999, lower than Oregon's statewide level of \$26,958.

The tourism industry in this area is small compared to other Oregon regions; however, tourism in Harney and Malheur Counties provides a critical monetary inflow to the economies.

2.24 Energy and Mineral Resources

2.22 Lands and Rights-of-Way

The BLM administers public lands in the Planning Area, which is located in Harney and Malheur Counties. According to available GIS data, the approximate percentages of surface area administration/ownership within the Planning Area are as follows: BLM - 73 percent, USFWS - 1.6 percent, State of Oregon (Division of State Lands, ODFW) - 0.4 percent, and privately owned - 25 percent.

BLM lands are divided into three zones that identify the public land for potential land tenure adjustments (e.g., acquisition or disposal) consistent with existing regulations and BLM policy. In the Steens Mountain CMPA, there are inconsistencies between the current land tenure designations and legislative requirements. These inconsistencies will be addressed through the RMP. Figure 2.4 shows land tenure boundaries.

Rights-of-way (ROWs) are granted in the Planning Area for buried and overhead telephone lines, electric distribution lines, irrigation ditches, canals, reservoir sites, and roads and highways. Large scale utility ROWs such as power transmission lines (generally greater the 69kV) exist in the Planning Area but are not numerous. Designated corridors exist along the few major facilities and along high standard county roads, as well as state and federal highways.

2.23 Geology

The Planning Area is part of the Basin and Range province, which consists of a series of nearly parallel, generally north trending, fault-block mountains (horsts) and intervening broad valleys (grabens). Drainage is generally internal with no outlet to the sea.

The Basin and Range province began to evolve in the middle Miocene as a result of regional, generally east-west extension. The regional extension was accompanied by extrusion of Steens Basalt lava flows approximately 16 million years ago over an area 100 by 180 miles that includes all of the Planning Area.

Steens Mountain is a fault-block mountain that dips gently westward and is characterized by its precipitous east-facing 5,500-foot high escarpment overlooking Alvord Valley. The elevation of 9,500 feet allowed the formation of alpine glaciers less than one million years ago on the eastern edge of Steens Mountain.

The BLM manages energy and mineral resources on 1,549,00 acres of land that has federal surface and federal subsurface (mineral estate) ownership within the Planning Area. The BLM manages a total of 72,000 acres of land with nonfederal surface and federal subsurface ownership within the Planning Area. The BLM manages a total of 1,000 acres of land with nonfederal surface and partial federal subsurface ownership (ownership of specific mineral resources such as oil and gas resources) in the Planning Area. There is nonfederal subsurface ownership on 552,000 acres of land within the Planning Area, which is 25 percent of the land. Detailed information is on master title plats available in each BLM DO.

In October 2001, 37 mining claims were in the Planning Area; six are grandfathered claims within the Mineral Withdrawal Area east of the Steens Mountain CMPA.

Congressional action has closed a total of 1,181,362 acres in the Planning Area to mineral leasing in the Mineral Withdrawal Area, Steens Mountain Wilderness, WSAs and designated WSRs. Congressional action has also closed 748,119 acres to mineral location under the 1872 Mining Law in the Mineral Withdrawal Area, Steens Mountain Wilderness, and designated wild segments of WSRs.

2.25 Cultural Resources

Prehistoric, or precontact, cultural resources include lithic scatters, rock shelters, pithouses, petroglyphs, hearths, and rock alignments. Historic cultural resources include buildings and building ruins, wagon roads, railroad grades, irrigation ditches and associated structures, dams, and archaeological deposits.

Only seven percent or less of the public land in southeastern Oregon has been inventoried for cultural resources.

The archaeological record is extensive in terms of site numbers and age. Evidence exists in the Planning Area and Steens Mountain of some of the earliest occupation in North America over the past 10,000 years. Prehistoric sites are those older than about 1830 A.D. and include the following: stone flake scatters, habitation sites, toolstone quarries, rock shelters and caves, rock art and rock structures such as rock rings (wickiup supports), and hunting blinds.

Fur trappers were the first Euro-Americans to visit the Steens Mountain Area in a brief foray in 1826. The next visitors came in the 1840s and 1850s. The area was first permanently settled in the 1870s.

Since the late 1970s, a total of 590 cultural properties have been recorded in the Planning Area (561 prehistoric and 29 historic). The Steens Mountain area contains 443 archeological sites covering 2,911 acres. Only eight percent of the area has been surveyed for archeological sites and most surveys have been tied to BLM projects.

2.26 Native American Traditional Values

No Native American subsistence areas have been identified. Prior to non-Native American settlement, the area was occupied and used by Northern Paiute bands. Many of their descendants now live on the Burns Paiute Reservation in Burns, Oregon; the Warm Springs Reservation in Warm Springs, Oregon; and the Fort McDermitt Reservation in McDermitt, Nevada. Sacred sites, significant landforms, and traditional resource sites may be present of which the BLM is unaware.

2.27 Paleontological Resources

Fossil localities have been reported on public land in the Planning Area. Most of the finds have been exposed by wind or water erosion, and are widely dispersed, situated primarily along maintained county or BLM roads. Several localities are the subject of ongoing academic research. Known locations of plant fossils are on private and public land, as well as several unexplored exposures that are likely to contain animal fossils.

A survey of known paleontological localities was conducted in May of 1999 within and near the Steens Mountain CMPA. Animal remains from sabertooth cats, mastodons, giant camels, small camels (llama-like), horses and horned rodents were found. A plant locality within the area was reassessed and yielded flora which would normally occur in a small lake environment in a slightly warmer, more temperate climate than exists in the area today. These fossil localities, especially the known and potential animal localities, are highly significant in that they are a window to the environment existing millions of years ago.

2.28 Hazardous Materials

Several sites in the Planning Area contain hazards associated with abandoned mine land. These hazards include shafts, adits, potential hantavirus, potential mercury contamination, and a dynamite cache that was burned by the Oregon State Police bomb squad.

Remediation of abandoned mine lands and hazardous materials sites is analyzed in documents specific to those sites and will not be addressed further in the RMP.

2.29 Roads/Transportation

In the Planning Area there are several BLM maintained, private, state, and county roads, as well as low standard roads and trails. These roads and trails are important for access to BLM lands and are occasionally maintained by the BLM in support of a special project such as fire rehabilitation.

Corrective maintenance occurs as problems are identified and funds permit. Road construction has been limited to improving or upgrading segments of road to improve access or to alleviate maintenance or environmental problems.

In 2000, as part of the Act, Congress closed the Steen Mountain Wilderness to motorized or mechanized vehicles, mechanical transport, motorized equipment, and the landing of aircraft.

3 EXISTING MANAGEMENT SITUATION

3.1 Existing Management Direction

3.1.1 Introduction

This section describes the management direction found within the Andrews MFP. Several activity level plans have also been completed in recent years. There are also several BLM program documents or Inter-Agency plan/NEPA documents and decisions which guide current management of lands within the Planning Area. The specific management direction from the Andrews MFP, the Interim Management Policy, and the Act are summarized in the following section.

3.2 Existing Management Situation by Resource

3.2.1 Air Quality

3.2.1.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Limit prescribed burning in rangelands to 6,000 acres per year.

3.2.2 Vegetation

3.2.2.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective 1: Restore, protect, and enhance the diversity and distribution of desirable vegetation communities, including perennial native and desirable introduced plant species. Provide for their continued existence and normal function in nutrient, water, and energy cycles.

Objective 2: Manage big sagebrush cover in seedings and on native rangeland to meet the life history requirements of sagebrush-dependent wildlife.

Objective 3: Control the introduction and proliferation of noxious weed species and reduce the extent and density of established weed species to within acceptable limits.

3.2.3 Special Status Plants

3.2.3.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Manage public land to maintain, restore, or enhance populations and habitats of special status plant species. Priority for the application of management actions would be (1) federal endangered species, (2) federal threatened species, (3) federal proposed species, (4) federal candidate species, (5) state listed species, (6)

BLM sensitive species, (7) BLM assessment species, and (8) BLM tracking species. Manage in order to conserve or lead to the recovery of threatened or endangered species.

3.2.4 Watershed/Water Resources and Riparian/Wetlands

3.2.4.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective 1: Ensure that surface water and ground water influenced by BLM activities comply with or are making progress toward achieving State of Oregon water quality standards for beneficial uses as established per stream by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ).

Objective 2: Restore, maintain, or improve riparian vegetation, habitat diversity, and associated watershed function to achieve healthy and productive riparian areas and wetlands.

3.2.5 Grazing Management

3.2.5.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Provide for a sustained level of livestock grazing consistent with other resource objectives and public land use allocations.

Under the existing plan, forage allocations are adjusted to accommodate other resource values. Forage is allocated for wild horses and wildlife. In major riparian areas and special management areas, grazing is managed to improve or maintain the condition of the area.

Under the existing plan, acres in 32 allotments are managed under category "I", improve; seven allotments are managed under "M", maintain, and 33 allotments are managed under category "C", custodial.

3.2.5.2 Interim Management Policy

Livestock grazing will continue in the Steens Mountain CMPA where allowed under the Act, and in conformance with applicable laws, policy, and BLM regulations including the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands in Oregon and Washington (August 1997).

Grazing management will be guided by the Andrews MFP, 1982, the Andrews Range Program Summary 1984, the Three Rivers RMP, 1992 and other changes created by the Act.

The BLM will retire grazing permits, in whole or part, applicable to certain lands within the Steens Mountain Wilderness in accordance with section 113(d)(2) of the Act after implementing fencing and alternative forage resources in accordance with sections 113(d)(3) and 113(d)(4) of the Act.

Adjustments in allotment boundaries, ten year permits, and grazing preference associated with the above referenced sections of the Act will only be implemented to reflect the changes created by the Act.

3.2.6 Fisheries

3.2.6.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Restore, maintain, or improve habitat to provide for diverse and self-sustaining communities of fishes and other aquatic organisms.

3.2.7 Wildlife

3.2.7.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective 1: Maintain, restore, or enhance riparian areas and wetlands so they provide diverse and healthy conditions for wildlife.

Objective 2: Manage upland habitats in forest, woodland and rangeland vegetation types so that the forage, water, cover, structure and security necessary for wildlife are available on the public land.

3.2.7.2 Interim Management Policy

Agreements with the APHIS concerning animal damage control will be modified to reflect changed land designations (e.g., wilderness) in identified work areas, methods of control, and transportation into those areas. Existing agreements with state and federal wildlife agencies will be modified to conform with the applicable changes created by legislation.

Hunting, fishing, and trapping will continue within the Steens Mountain CMPA consistent with the Act, other applicable laws and regulations of the United States and the State of Oregon, and will be managed under regulations provided by the ODFW and in accordance with section 113(d) of the Act.

3.2.8 Wild Horses

3.2.8.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Maintain and manage wild horse herds in established HMAs at AMLs to ensure a thriving, natural ecological balance between wild horse populations, wildlife, livestock, vegetation resources, and other resource values. Enhance and perpetuate special and unique characteristics that distinguish the respective herds.

Five HMAs are in the Planning Area: South Steens, Heath Creek/Sheepshead, Alvord/Tule Springs, Kiger, and Riddle Mountain. Herd numbers are kept at levels consistent with existing herd management plans. Maintaining these herd numbers requires roundups every three to five years. Under the existing plan, superior wild stock will be transferred between herds to improve herd quality over time. No domesticated stock will be utilized for this purpose.

3.2.9 Fire Management

3.2.9.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective 1: Provide an Appropriate Management Response (AMR) on all wildland fires, with emphasis on minimizing suppression costs, considering fire fighter and public safety, benefits, and values to be protected, consistent with resource objectives.

Objective 2: Recognize fire as a critical natural process and use it to protect, maintain, and enhance resources. Under the existing plan, both fire suppression and the use of prescribed fire are emphasized in the fire program.

3.2.9.2 Interim Management Policy

On all lands other than WSAs or designated Steens Mountain Wilderness within the Steens Mountain CMPA, current fire management practices will continue, subject to provisions in the Act.

Fire suppression within the Steens Mountain Wilderness will take place in accordance with the provisions of the Wilderness Act, Management of Designated Wilderness Manual 8560, and the Act. Pursuant to 8560 § .35A, all wildland fires will be suppressed until an approved Fire Management Plan is prepared.

Methods and equipment which least alter the landscape or disturb the land surface will be used.

Fire management within the WSAs will continue in accordance with the provisions of the Interim Management Policy For Lands Under Wilderness Review (*H-8550-1*).

All wildland fires will be suppressed until an approved Fire Management Plan is prepared.

On all lands other than WSAs or designated Steens Mountain Wilderness, within the Steens Mountain CMPA, the BLM's Emergency Fire Rehabilitation policy will be in effect.

3.2.10 Woodlands

3.2.10.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Restore productivity and biodiversity in juniper and quaking aspen woodland areas. Manage juniper areas where encroachment or increased density is threatening other resource values. Retain old growth characteristics in historic juniper sites not prone to frequent fire. Manage quaking aspen to maintain diversity of age classes and to allow for species reestablishment.

3.2.11 Special Status Animal Species

3.2.11.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective 1: Manage public land to maintain, restore, or enhance populations and habitats of special status animal species. Priority for the application of management actions would be (1) federal endangered species, (2) federal threatened species, (3) federal proposed species, (4) federal candidate species, (5) state listed species, (6) BLM sensitive species, (7) BLM assessment species, and (8) BLM tracking species. Manage in order to conserve or lead to the recovery of threatened or endangered species. Manage habitat for special status animal species to preserve the species and to prevent the need to list them as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Objective 2: Facilitate the maintenance, restoration, and enhancement of bighorn sheep populations and habitat on public land. Pursue management in accordance with Oregon's Bighorn Sheep Management Plan in a manner consistent with the principles of multiple-use management.

3.2.11.2 Interim Management Policy

Manage habitat for special status animal species to preserve the species and to prevent the need to list them as threatened or endangered under ESA.

3.2.12 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

3.2.12.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Retain existing and designate new ACEC/RNAs where relevance and importance criteria are met and special management is required to protect the values identified.

Alvord Desert ACEC - 17,933 acres managed to protect desert land forms and unique plant communities.

Alvord Peak ACEC - 15,015 acres managed to protect bighorn sheep habitat.

Borax Lake ACEC - 520 acres managed to protect diverse plant and animal life in the vicinity of Borax Lake, where the federally endangered Borax Lake chub is located.

East Kiger Plateau ACEC/RNA - 1,216 acres managed to protect excellent condition, high elevation fescue grassland and special status plants (partially included in Steens Mountain ACEC).

Little Blitzen ACEC/RNA - 2,530 acres managed to protect mid- to high-elevation vernal pond, stream system in subalpine, quaking aspen grove, snow deflation, and snow cover communities, late-lying snowbeds, fescue grassland, and special status plants (entirely within Steens Mountain ACEC).

Little Wildhorse Lake ACEC/RNA - 241 acres managed to protect pristine, mid- to high-elevation lake (entirely within Steens Mountain ACEC).

Long Draw ACEC/RNA - 441 acres managed to protect vegetation community type of big sagebrush/Indian ricegrass/needle-and-thread grass.

Mickey Basin ACEC/RNA - 560 acres managed to protect winterfat plant community.

Picket Rim ACEC - 3,941 acres managed to protect nesting area and habitat for many kinds of birds of prey.

Pueblo Foothills ACEC/RNA - 2,503 acres managed to protect narrowleaf cottonwood/Mormon tea community complex and special status plants.

Rooster Comb ACEC/RNA - 716 acres managed to protect mountain mahogany/blue bunch wheatgrass plant communities and black cottonwood riparian plant communities (entirely within Steens Mountain ACEC).

South Fork Willow Creek ACEC/RNA - 231 acres managed to protect downslope snow accumulation areas; upper cirque plant communities; stream system originating in a glacial cirque; and special status plants (entirely within Steens Mountain ACEC).

Steens Mountain ACEC - 56,187 acres managed to protect high scenic values on Steens Mountain, including Steens escarpment, vista of East Rim, and glacial cirques and valleys (this area is now designated Steens Mountain Wilderness).

Tumtum Lake ACEC/RNA - 2,064 acres managed to protect low-elevation alkaline lake; salt desert shrub plant communities; special status plants; and special status fish and habitat.

3.2.13 Redband Trout Reserve

3.2.13.1 Interim Management Policy

In cooperation with the ODFW, the Donner und Blitzen River above the confluence with Fish Creek will be managed as a redband trout reserve for the purposes stated in section 302(c) of the Act.

Scientific research, environmental education, and angling will continue under ODFW regulations and be consistent with the Management of Designated Wilderness Areas Manual 8560.

3.2.14 Wild and Scenic Rivers

3.2.14.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Protect and enhance ORVs of designated Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSRs), and protect and enhance ORVs of rivers found suitable for potential inclusion as WSRs until Congress acts.

3.2.14.2 Interim Management Policy

The Donner und Blitzen Wild and Scenic River and the newly designated WSRs will be managed in accordance with the Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and the Wilderness Act.

The Donner und Blitzen National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan will continue to guide management of the Donner und Blitzen Wild and

Scenic River to the extent the management plan is consistent with the Act.

3.2.15 Wildlands Juniper Management Area

3.2.15.1 Interim Management Policy

The WJMA will be managed consistent with section 501 of the Act. Prior to the development of juniper management strategies, the area will be inventoried for plants and resident or seasonal animals. Some interpretive signs may be placed in strategic locations. Any juniper management actions that take place in the WJMA will be evaluated through the NEPA process and coordinated with the SMAC to ensure they meet the requirements and purpose of the Act.

3.2.16 Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas

3.2.16.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

The Andrews MFP discussed wilderness and WSAs but did not make any decisions. The decisions were made by the Oregon Wilderness EIS (BLM 1989a), the Wilderness Study Report (BLM 1991b), and the Act.

Until Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations or otherwise releases the existing WSAs for other purposes, they will continue to be managed in accordance with the BLM's Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review, FLPMA, and other applicable laws and policies.

3.2.16.2 Interim Management Policy

The non-impairment standard under FLPMA will continue to apply to WSAs, and management will continue as directed under the Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review (BLM H-8550-1).

A 3,267 acre parcel in the Bridge Creek and Blitzen River WSAs was released from management requirements of section 603(c) of FLPMA under the provisions of the Act and is no longer subject to management under wilderness suitability requirements set forth in that section.

The 3,840 acre addition to the Basque Hills WSA will be managed under section 603 (c) of FLPMA to protect and enhance the wilderness values of these lands.

Subject to valid existing rights, the BLM will administer the Steens Mountain Wilderness in accordance with the Wilderness Act, 43CFR 6300, the

Management of Designated Wilderness Areas Manual 8560, and the Act.

3.2.17 Recreation

3.2.17.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Provide and enhance developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities, while protecting resources, to manage the increasing demand for resource-dependent recreation activities.

3.2.17.2 Interim Management Policy

Recreation management will continue, consistent with the Act, the Wilderness Act, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, and other applicable existing land use plans and regulations.

Recreation facilities will continue to provide quality recreation and protect public health and safety.

Existing special recreation use permits will continue, when consistent with the Act. Stipulations may be developed for current Burns District Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) within the Steens Mountain CMPA to assure consistency with the Act and the land designations of the Act. Wilderness-specific permit stipulations may be developed if necessary to ensure compliance with the Wilderness Act. SRPs will be administered in conformance with the Act and applicable laws, policies, and plans. Commercial Day Use permit stipulations will be developed as appropriate to ensure consistency with the Act and the land designations of the Act.

3.2.18 Visual Resources

3.2.18.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Manage public land actions and activities in a manner to be consistent with VRM Class Objectives.

3.2.18.2 Interim Management Policy

The Steens Mountain Wilderness, the previously existing and new WSRs, and all WSAs within the Planning will be managed as VRM Class I in accordance with current BLM policy.

The remainder of the lands in the Planning Area will be managed according to the existing VRM Class designations.

3.2.19 Lands, Realty and Rights-of-Way

3.2.19.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective 1: Retain public land with high public resource values. Consolidate public landholdings and acquire land or interests in land with high public resource values to ensure effective administration and improve resource management. Acquired land would be managed for the purposes for which it was acquired. Make available for disposal public land within Zone 3.

Objective 2: Establish utility and transportation system corridor routes to the extent possible, considering avoidance areas, consistent with resource objectives.

3.2.20 Off-Highway Vehicles

3.2.20.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Manage OHV use to protect resource values, promote public safety, provide OHV use opportunities where appropriate, and minimize conflicts among various users.

3.2.20.2 Interim Management Policy

Under section 112 of the Act, motorized and mechanical vehicle use on federal lands within the Steens Mountain CMPA is prohibited off road except for certain administrative uses and emergencies.

Existing seasonal and travel route closures within the Steens Mountain CMPA will remain in effect. OHV designations for WSAs and other public lands identified in the February 20, 1987 Federal Register Notice will also remain in effect.

Designation of the Steens Mountain Wilderness by the Act resulted in closure of the Wilderness to all OHV use except where specifically authorized by the BLM for protection of human life, safety, and property (43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) sec. 6302.20 and 6303.1), and as may be authorized under the Wilderness Act and House Report 101-405 (Arizona Desert Wilderness Act).

All ways or vehicular routes within the Steens Mountain Wilderness will be closed to motorized or mechanized use except under the terms provided in sections 112(b)(2), 112(e)(1), and 202(d)(1) in the Act.

3.2.21 Minerals

3.2.21.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective 1: Provide opportunities for exploration and development of leasable energy and mineral resources while protecting other sensitive resources. The Mineral Withdrawal Area, Steens Mountain Wilderness, WSAs, and designated WSRs are closed or withdrawn from leasable mineral entry by Congressional action for 1,181,362 acres.

Objective 2: Provide opportunities for exploration and development of locatable mineral resources while protecting other sensitive resources. The Mineral Withdrawal Area, Steens Mountain Wilderness, and designated wild segments of WSRs are closed to mineral location by Congressional action (a total of 748,119 acres).

Objective 3: Provide for public demand for saleable minerals from public land while protecting sensitive resources. The Mineral Withdrawal Area is closed to saleable mineral disposal by congressional action except for materials sites identified in the Act.

3.2.21.2 Interim Management Policy

A mineral withdrawal area is identified in Title IV of the Act and depicted on the map referred to in Section 101(a) (in the Act). The terms of the withdrawal are specified in section 401 of the Act which states, "Subject to valid existing rights, the federal lands and interests in lands included within the withdrawal boundary...are hereby withdrawn from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and operation of mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws..." "If consistent with the purposes of the Act...the [BLM] may permit the development of salable mineral resources, for road maintenance use only, in those locations identified on the map referred to in Section 101(a) as an existing "gravel pit" within the mineral withdrawal boundaries...where such development was authorized before the date of the enactment of the Act."

Activities on existing valid mining claims may continue under valid existing rights in accordance with the Act and other existing laws and regulations.

Abandoned mine land will continue to be rehabilitated to meet safety standards as time and money allow.

3.2.22 **Cultural Resources**

3.2.22.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective 1: Protect and conserve cultural and paleontological resources.

Objective 2: Increase the public's knowledge of, appreciation for, and sensitivity to cultural and paleontological resources.

Objective 3: Consult and coordinate with Native American groups to ensure their interests are considered and their traditional religious sites, land forms and resources are taken into account.

3.2.22.2 Interim Management Policy

Personal tribal consultation primarily with the Burns Paiute Tribe will occur frequently in order to keep the tribe aware of Steens Mountain CMPA issues.

Consultation on individual projects or actions will occur as the need arises. Efforts to protect tribal traditional use areas will continue where required.

Steens Mountain CMPA related projects or actions will continue to receive cultural resources inventories prior to implementation.

Scientific archaeological investigations involving surface disturbance such as testing and excavation will continue to be managed under existing policy and regulation, consistent with the purposes and objectives of the Act.

In the Riddle Brothers Ranch National Historic District, management and interpretation efforts such as on and off-site signing, historic structure stabilization, restoration, and fire protection may continue as necessary to protect historic resources.

3.2.23 **Human Uses and Values**

3.2.23.1 Andrews Management Framework Plan

Objective: Manage public land and pursue partnerships to provide social and economic benefits to local residents, businesses, visitors, and for future generations.

3.3 **Management Direction Carried Forward in the Resource Management Plan**

This section describes the existing management direction that is being carried forward without modification from the existing plans and associated NEPA documents applicable to the Planning Area.

The following sections describe goals and objectives as well as elements created by legislation for the Andrews Management Unit and Steens Mountain CMPA.

3.3.1 General Andrews Management Unit Goals and Objectives

1. The Andrews MU shall be managed by the BLM to protect resources in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable laws and regulations.
2. The Andrews MU shall be managed in accordance with all existing public land law.
3. Subject to valid existing rights, all land within the Mineral Withdrawal Area is withdrawn from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws relating to mineral and geothermal leasing.
4. Hunting and fishing are permitted within the Andrews MU in accordance with applicable federal and state laws with the exception that the BLM, in conjunction with the ODFW, may designate no hunting zones for reasons concerning public safety, administration or public use and enjoyment.
5. OHV use in the Andrews MU shall be allowed to the extent that usage conforms with site-specific area designations and is compatible with OHV management as described in the BLM's OHV National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle Use on Public Lands. This strategy took effect in January 2001.
6. Resources in the Andrews MU will be managed in accordance with all BLM guidance and policies.

3.3.2 Goals and Objectives Specific to the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area

1. To manage the Steens Mountain CMPA to conserve, protect, and manage the long-term ecological integrity of Steens Mountain for present and future generations;
2. To maintain and enhance cooperative and innovative management projects, programs, and agreements between tribal, public, and private interests in the Steens Mountain CMPA;
3. To promote grazing, recreation, historic, and other sustainable uses;
4. To conserve, protect and ensure traditional access to cultural, gathering, religious, and archaeological sites on public land within the Steens Mountain CMPA by members of the Burns Paiute Tribe and to promote cooperation with private landowners;

5. To ensure the conservation, protection, and improved management of the ecological, social, and economic environment of the Steens Mountain CMPA, including geological, biological, wildlife, riparian, and scenic resources;
6. To promote and foster cooperation, communication, and understanding and to reduce conflict between Steens Mountain users and interests; and
7. To ensure that a monitoring program for public land within the Steens Mountain CMPA will be implemented in order to determine progress toward ecological integrity objectives.

3.3.3 Elements Created by Legislation to Support the Goals and Objectives of the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area

1. The Steens Mountain Wilderness consisting of 169,465 acres of public land was established and will be managed such that:
 - a. Subject to valid existing rights, the Steens Mountain Wilderness shall be administered by the BLM in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).
 - b. The jurisdiction or responsibilities of the State of Oregon, with respect to wildlife and fish on the public land within the Steens Mountain Wilderness, will not be affected by the Act.
 - c. No expressed or implied reservation of water for any purpose was created by the Act, and water rights in existence prior to the enactment date are not affected by the Act.
 - d. Any new water right determined necessary for purposes of the Act must be established under the procedures and substantive requirements of Oregon law.
2. Additional Management Goals for the Steens Mountain Wilderness Pursuant to BLM Wilderness Policy are to:
 - a. Provide for the long-term protection and preservation of the area's wilderness character under a principle of non-degradation. The

- area's natural condition, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, and any ecological, geological or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value will be managed so they will remain unimpaired.
- b. Manage the area for the use and enjoyment of visitors in a manner that will leave the area unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness. The wilderness resources will be dominant in all management decisions where a choice must be made between preservation of the wilderness character and visitor use.
- c. Manage the area using the minimum tool, equipment or structure necessary to successfully, safely, and economically accomplish the objectives. The chosen tool, equipment or structure should be the one that least degrades wilderness values temporarily or permanently. Management will seek to preserve spontaneity of use and as much freedom from regulation as possible.
- d. Manage nonconforming but acceptable uses permitted by the Wilderness Act and subsequent laws in a manner that will prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the area's wilderness character. Nonconforming uses are the exception rather than the rule; therefore, emphasis is placed on wilderness character.
- e. The 3,267-acre parcel of the Blitzen River and Bridge Creek WSAs is released from WSA status and is no longer subject to management under "wilderness suitability" requirements set forth under section 603 of FLPMA. The 3,840-acre addition to the Basque Hills WSA, however, will be managed for "wilderness suitability."
- f. The Act designated the Steens Mountain Wilderness as "closed" to OHV use and the remainder of the Steens Mountain CMPA as prohibiting off-road travel.
3. The Redband Trout Reserve was created to conserve, protect, and enhance Redband trout and the unique ecosystem; and to provide opportunities for research, education, and fish and wildlife-oriented recreation. The reserve consists of the Donner und Blitzen WSR above its confluence with Fish Creek and the adjacent riparian areas on public land within the Steens Mountain Wilderness.
4. An area consisting of 97,671 acres of public land within the Steens Mountain Wilderness will be managed as a No Livestock Grazing Area (Section 113 of Act).
5. The WJMA consisting of 3,267 acres of public land will be used for experimentation, education, interpretation, and demonstration of management techniques for restoration of historic fire regime and native vegetation communities.
6. Kiger Creek (4.25 miles), Wildhorse Creek (7.36 miles), and Little Wildhorse Creek (2.60 miles) were designated as new WSRs. Additional segments of the Donner und Blitzen WSR including Ankle Creek (8.10 miles), South Fork of Ankle Creek (1.60 miles), and Mud Creek (5.10 miles) were also designated. These additions provide a total of 103.65 miles of WSR within the Steens Mountain CMPA.
7. Five specific land exchanges were authorized under Title VI of the Act. Sec. 402 further requires federal acquisition of all state lands and interests within the mineral withdrawal area, which includes the entire CMPA. The Act also provides for future acquisitions within the boundaries of the Steens Mountain CMPA by voluntary exchange, donation or purchase from willing sellers. The purposes of these provisions are to minimize private land within the Wilderness Area and to protect and consolidate public landownership within the Steens Mountain CMPA.
8. The SMAC will be established to advise the BLM on managing the Steens Mountain CMPA and promoting cooperative management. The SMAC shall utilize sound science, existing plans, and other tools to formulate recommendations regarding new and unique approaches to the management of land within the boundaries of the Steens

Mountain CMPA. Cooperative programs and incentives will also be utilized to promote seamless landscape management that meets human needs and maintains and improves ecological and economic integrity. (See CHAPTER VII.C. Cooperation, Consultation, and Coordination for a list of SMAC positions.)

9. A Science Advisory Committee will advise the BLM and the SMAC on scientific issues concerning the Steens Mountain CMPA. The committee will be established and convened, when necessary, as determined by the SMAC and the BLM.

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4 MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES (RECOMMENDATIONS AND INTEGRATED PRIORITIES)

4.1 Introduction

Identification of potential management opportunities is step five in developing the AMS. Management opportunities are actions or management direction that could be taken to resolve the issues and concerns identified. Management opportunities include those that would maintain or enhance resources, increase or decrease production or use, and minimize depletion or improve conditions of resources managed by the BLM or other agencies. The management opportunities are the basis for action alternatives in the RMP/EIS. Management opportunities and action alternatives must consider the land's capability to achieve the objectives.

This section also serves as step four of the subbasin review process, which is to develop recommendations and determine integrated priorities. Management opportunities serve as the recommendations for the subbasin review area. For the BLM administered lands and resources considered in the subbasin review, priorities for the various management opportunities will be set during preparation of the RMP/EIS.

The ICBEMP scientific assessments identified a number of findings determined by BLM staff to be applicable to the Planning Area and to this planning effort (USFS and BLM 1999). Those applicable findings will be addressed in the RMP/EIS.

4.2 Management Opportunities by Resource

The following sections identify management opportunities for resources in all or portions of the subbasin review area. These management opportunities include those resource areas that are specific to BLM administered land and those that are integral to a larger geographical region (air quality, water, wildlife).

4.2.1 Air Quality

With all authorized actions, meet or exceed the National Ambient Air Quality Standards and the Prevention of Significant Deteriorations.

4.2.2 Vegetation

Restore, protect, and enhance the diversity and distribution of desirable vegetation communities, including perennial native and desirable introduced plant species.

Provide for their continued existence and normal function in nutrient, water, and energy cycles.

Manage big sagebrush cover in seedlings and on native rangelands to meet the life history requirements of sagebrush-dependent wildlife.

Control the introduction and proliferation of noxious weed species and reduce the extent and density of established weed species to within acceptable limits.

4.2.3 Special Status Plants

Manage public land to maintain, restore, or enhance populations and habitats of special status plant species. Priority for the application of management actions would be: (1) federal endangered species, (2) federal threatened species, (3) federal proposed species, (4) federal candidate species, (5) state listed species, (6) BLM sensitive species, (7) BLM assessment species, and (8) BLM tracking species.

Manage in order to conserve or lead to the recovery of threatened or endangered species.

4.2.4 Water Resources and Riparian/Wetlands

Ensure that surface water and groundwater influenced by BLM activities comply with or are making progress toward achieving State of Oregon water quality standards for beneficial uses as established per stream by the ODEQ.

Restore, maintain, or improve riparian vegetation, habitat diversity, and associated watershed function to achieve healthy and productive riparian areas and wetlands.

4.2.5 Fish and Aquatic Habitat

Restore, maintain, or improve habitat to provide for diverse and self-sustaining communities of fishes and other aquatic organisms.

4.2.6 Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

Maintain, restore, or enhance riparian areas and wetlands so they provide diverse and healthy habitat conditions for wildlife.

Manage upland habitats so that the forage, water, cover, structure, and security necessary for wildlife are available on public land.

4.2.7 Special Status Animal Species

Manage public land to maintain, restore, or enhance populations and habitats of special status animal species. Priority for the application of management actions would be: (1) federal endangered species, (2) federal threatened species, (3) federal proposed species, (4) federal candidate species, (5) state listed species, (6) BLM sensitive species, (7) BLM assessment species, and (8) BLM tracking species.

Manage in order to conserve or lead to the recovery of threatened or endangered species.

Facilitate the maintenance, restoration, and enhancement of bighorn sheep populations and habitat on public land. Pursue management in accordance with Oregon's Bighorn Sheep Management Plan in a manner consistent with the principles of multiple-use management.

4.2.8 Wild Horses

Maintain and manage wild horse herds in established HMAs at AMLs to ensure or enhance a thriving natural ecological balance between wild horse populations, wildlife, livestock, vegetation resources, and other resource values.

Enhance and perpetuate special and unique characteristics that distinguish the respective herds.

An opportunity exists to combine the small Heath Creek/Sheepshead HMA with the adjacent larger more viable Sheepshead HMA (Vale District). The same opportunity exists to combine the Alvord Tule Springs HMA with the adjacent Coyote Lake HMA. Animals currently mix between the respective HMAs where there are unfenced areas or ineffective natural boundaries.

4.2.9 Grazing Management

Grazing will be in compliance with current policy, which includes the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management for Public Lands in Oregon and Washington.

Provide for a sustained level of livestock grazing consistent with other resource objectives and public land use allocations.

Livestock grazing in the Planning Area will be managed under laws provided by the Taylor Grazing Act, Public Rangelands Improvement Act, national Environmental

Policy Act, Wilderness Act, the Act, and BLM regulations. The RMP will include the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for grazing management, which apply to all BLM lands in Oregon.

The RMP will address several pasture and allotment boundary changes occurring as a result of land exchanges, forage offsets for creation of the "no-livestock grazing" area and grazing management changes.

4.2.10 Woodlands

Manage woodlands to maintain or restore ecosystems to a condition in which biodiversity is preserved and occurrences of fire, insects, and disease do not exceed levels normally expected in a healthy woodland.

Manage woodlands for long-term, healthy habitat for animal and plant species.

Restore productivity and biodiversity in juniper and aspen woodland areas.

Manage juniper areas where encroachment or increased density is threatening other resource values.

Retain old growth characteristics in historic juniper sites not prone to frequent fire.

Manage aspen to maintain diversity of age classes and to allow for species reestablishment.

4.2.11 Fire

Provide an AMR on all wildland fires with emphasis on fire fighter and public safety, benefits, minimizing suppression costs, and protecting values consistent with resource objectives.

Recognize fire as a critical natural process and use it to protect, maintain, and enhance resources.

4.2.12 Special Management Areas

Retain existing and designate new ACECs/RNAs where relevance and importance criteria are met and special management is required to protect the values identified.

Protect and enhance ORVs of designated WSRs and protect and enhance ORVs of rivers found suitable for WSR status until Congress acts.

4.2.13 Wilderness/Wilderness Study Areas

Designated Wilderness Areas will be managed under the Wilderness Management Policy, the Wilderness Act, and 43 CFR 6300. The wilderness resources will be dominant whenever choices must be made between preservation of the wilderness character and visitor use.

BLM administered land identified in the Wilderness Study Report and determined to have wilderness values could be included in adjacent WSAs and managed under Interim Management Policy.

4.2.14 Recreation

Provide and enhance developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities and manage the increasing demand for resource-dependent recreation activities while protecting resources.

Manage OHV use to protect resource values, promote public safety, provide OHV use opportunities where appropriate, and minimize conflicts among various users.

4.2.15 Visual Resources

Manage public land actions and activities in a manner consistent with VRM class objectives.

4.2.16 Human Uses and Values

Manage public land and pursue partnerships to provide social and economic benefits to local residents, businesses, visitors, and for future generations.

4.2.17 Lands and Realty

Retain public land with high public resource values.

Consolidate public land holdings and acquire land or interests in land with high public resource values to ensure effective administration and improve resource

management. Acquired land would be managed for its intended purpose.

Make public land available for disposal within Zone 3 by state indemnity selection, private or state exchange, Recreation and Public Purpose (R&PP) Act lease or sale, public sale, or other authorized method.

Establish utility and transportation system corridor routes consistent with resource objectives and considering avoidance areas.

4.2.18 Minerals

Provide opportunities for exploration and development of leasable energy and mineral resources while protecting other sensitive resources.

Provide opportunities for exploration and development of locatable mineral resources while protecting other sensitive resources.

Provide for public demand for saleable minerals from public land while protecting sensitive resources.

4.2.19 Cultural Resources

Protect and conserve cultural and paleontological resources.

Increase the public's knowledge, appreciation, and sensitivity regarding cultural and paleontological resources.

Consult and coordinate with American Indian groups to ensure consideration of their traditional religious sites, land forms, resources, and other interests.

4.3 Management Opportunities for the Cooperative Management and Protection Area

Manage the Steens Mountain CMPA to conserve, protect, and manage the long-term ecological integrity of Steens Mountain for present and future generations.

Maintain and enhance cooperative and innovative management projects, programs, and agreements between tribal, public, and private interests in the Steens Mountain CMPA.

Promote grazing, recreation, historic, and other sustainable uses.

Conserve, protect and ensure traditional access to cultural, gathering, religious, and archaeological sites on public land within the Steens Mountain CMPA by members of the Burns Paiute Tribe and promote cooperation with private landowners.

Ensure the conservation, protection, and improved management of the ecological, social, and economic environment of the Steens Mountain CMPA, including geological, biological, wildlife, riparian, and scenic resources.

Promote and foster cooperation, communication, and understanding in order to reduce conflict between Steens Mountain users and other interests.

Establish a monitoring program for public land within the Steens Mountain CMPA so that progress toward ecological integrity objectives can be determined.

5 LEGAL MANDATES, PLANNING CRITERIA AND PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES - ANDREWS MANAGEMENT UNIT/STEENS MOUNTAIN CMPA RMP/EIS

5.1 Introduction

This section briefly describes the legal authorities pertaining to BLM land use planning, the planning criteria to be used in preparing the Andrews MU/Steens Mountain CMPA RMP/EIS, and the proposed alternatives to be addressed in the RMP/EIS.

Principles of ecosystem management, as well as a continuing commitment to multiple-use and sustained yield, will guide land use decisions in the Planning Area. The commitment to multiple-use will not mean that all land will be open for all uses. Some uses may be excluded on some land to protect specific resource values or uses. Any such exclusion, however, will be based on laws or regulations or determined through a planning process subject to public involvement.

The NEPA requires an EIS to examine a range of alternatives, including a No Action Alternative, to resolve the issues in question. Each alternative, except the No Action Alternative, should represent a complete but alternate means of satisfying the identified purpose and need of the EIS, as well as resolving the issues. New alternatives may be developed and defined as needed during the preparation of the EIS. A range of preliminary alternatives has been identified for this RMP/EIS. These will be refined as the process moves forward.

5.2 Legal Authorities

Several federal statutes have been enacted over time to establish and define the authority of the BLM to make decisions regarding management and use of public land resources. Following is a list of major legal authorities relevant to BLM land use planning.

1. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended, 43 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*
2. The National Environment Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*
3. The Clean Air Act of 1990, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 7418.
4. The Clean Water Act of 1987, as amended, 33 U.S.C. 1251.
5. The Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 U.S.C. 1323.
6. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703-712).
7. The Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. 201.
8. The Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*
9. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1271 *et seq.*
10. The Wilderness Act, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1131 *et seq.*
11. The Antiquities Act of 1906, 16 U.S.C. 431-433.
12. The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended, 16 U.S.C. 470.
13. The American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, 42 U.S.C. 1996.
14. The Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1926, as amended, 43 U.S.C. 869 *et seq.*
15. The Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1976, 30 U.S.C. 201 (a)(3)(A)(i).
16. The Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, 30 U.S.C. 1201 *et seq.*
17. The Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, 30 U.S.C. 181 *et seq.*
18. The Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987, 30 U.S.C. 181 *et seq.*
19. The General Mining Law of 1872, as amended, 30 U.S.C. 21 *et seq.*
20. The Mining and Mineral Policy Act of 1970, 30 U.S.C. 21a.
21. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, 43 U.S.C. 315.
22. The Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978, 43 U.S.C. 1901.

23. Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations), 49 *Fed. Reg.* 7629 (1994).
24. Executive Order 13007 (Indian Sacred Sites), 61 *Fed. Reg.* 26771 (1996).
25. Executive Order 13084 (consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments).
26. Executive Order 13112 (Invasive Species).
27. Executive Order 13186 of January 10, 2001 (responsibilities of federal agencies to protect Migratory Birds) 66 *Fed. Reg.* 3853 (2001).
28. Secretarial Order 3175 (incorporated into the Departmental manual at 512 DM 2).
29. Secretarial Order 3206 (American Indian Tribal Rights, Federal-Tribal Trust Responsibilities, and the Endangered Species Act).

One additional legal authority is specific to the Andrews MU/Steens Mountain RMP/EIS.

30. The Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000, P.L. 106-399, October 30, 2000

5.3 Planning Criteria

BLM planning regulations (43 Code of Federal Regulations 1610) require preparation of planning criteria for all RMPs. Planning criteria are the constraints or ground rules guiding and directing the development of the Plan. They determine how the planning team and the public approach the development of alternatives and ultimately the selection of a Preferred Alternative. Criteria ensure that plans are tailored to the identified issues, and that unnecessary data collection and analyses are avoided. Planning criteria are based on analyses of information pertinent to the Planning Area; professional judgment; standards prescribed by applicable laws, regulations, and agency guidance; and are the result of consultation and coordination with the public, other federal, state, and local agencies, and Indian tribes.

The preliminary criteria listed below were developed by the BLM and will be reviewed by the public before

being used in the RMP process. The criteria will be included in a Federal Register Notice along with notification of public scoping meetings. After public input, criteria become proposed criteria and can be added to or changed as issues are addressed or new information is presented. The Burns District Manager will approve the issues, criteria, and any changes.

5.3.1 General Planning Criteria

The following general planning criteria will guide the preparation of the RMP/EIS and future land-use decisions:

- The RMP/EIS will be completed in compliance with FLPMA and all other applicable laws.
- The planning team will work cooperatively with the state, SMAC, Resource Advisory Council (RAC), tribal governments, county and municipal governments, other federal agencies, and all other interested groups, agencies, and individuals. Public participation will be encouraged throughout the process.
- The RMP/EIS will establish the guidance upon which the BLM will rely in managing the Planning Area.
- The planning process will include an EIS that complies with NEPA standards.
- The RMP/EIS will emphasize the protection and enhancement of the Planning Area's biodiversity while at the same time providing the public with opportunities for compatible commodity-based and recreation activities.
- The RMP/EIS will recognize valid existing rights within the Planning Area and review how such rights are verified. The Plan will outline the process used by the BLM to address applications or notices filed on existing claims or other land use authorizations after completion of the Plan.
- The lifestyles and concerns of area residents, including the activities of grazing, fishing, and hunting, will be recognized in the Plan.
- Any land within the Planning Area's administrative boundary and subsequently acquired by the BLM will be managed consistent with the Plan, subject to any constraints associated with the acquisition.
- The RMP/EIS will recognize the state's responsibility to manage wildlife. The BLM would consult with the ODFW before establishing no-hunting zones or periods for the purposes of protecting public safety, administration, or public use and enjoyment.

Methods of access and the manner in which wildlife management activities are to be conducted will be governed by the BLM, consistent with language in the Act.

- The RMP/EIS will address transportation and access, and will identify where better access is warranted, where it should remain as is, and where decreased access is appropriate to protect Planning Area resources and manage visitation.
- The management of grazing is regulated by laws and regulations. The RMP/EIS will incorporate the Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines. It will define a strategy for ensuring that proper grazing practices are followed within the Planning Area.
- The planning process will involve American Indian tribal governments and will provide possible strategies to protect recognized traditional uses, if such uses are identified.
- Consistent with federal law and the Act, decisions in the RMP/EIS will strive to be compatible with existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state, federal, and tribal agencies.
- In addition to the general criteria listed above, specific criteria apply to the Steens Mountain CMPA.

The RMP/EIS will meet the following specific requirements of the Act:

- Protect the Steens Mountain CMPA's natural resources and outstanding recreation opportunities, while encouraging cooperative management;
- Describe appropriate uses and management of the Steens Mountain CMPA consistent with the Act;
- Incorporate, as appropriate, decisions contained in any current or future management or activity plan for the Steens Mountain CMPA; use information developed in previous studies of the land within or adjacent to the Steens Mountain CMPA;
- Coordinate with state, county, and private landowners and the Burns Paiute Tribe; and
- e. Determine measurable and achievable management objectives consistent with the Act to ensure the ecological integrity of the area.

5.3.2 Project Specific Criteria

In addition to the general planning criteria identified above, other specific planning criteria have been developed and apply to the RMP/EIS.

5.3.2.1 Air Quality

Under the Clean Air Act, air quality of the Planning Area is designated as Class II. All land will be managed under Class II standards unless reclassified by the State of Oregon.

5.3.2.2 Water Quality

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1977 as amended (Clean Water Act) requires the BLM to be consistent with state nonpoint source management program plans and relevant water quality standards. Section 313 requires compliance with state water quality standards. The RMP/EIS will incorporate BMPs or other conservation measures for specific programs and activities. Water quality will be maintained or improved in accordance with state and federal standards. In addition, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) will be developed pursuant to the Clean Water Act that address water quality limited stream segments.

5.3.2.3 Soil

Soil will be managed to protect long-term productivity. BMPs will be incorporated into other programs to minimize soil erosion and compaction resulting from management actions.

5.3.2.4 Vegetation

Vegetation will be managed to provide for biological diversity at the landscape level, to protect and restore native perennial and desirable nonnative perennial species, and to provide for consumptive uses and non-consumptive values, including visual quality and watershed condition.

5.3.2.5 Riparian Areas, Floodplains, and Wetlands

Riparian areas, floodplains, and wetlands will be managed to restore, protect or improve their natural functions relating to water storage, ground water recharge, water quality, and fish and wildlife values.

5.3.2.6 Woodlands

All juniper and quaking aspen woodlands will be managed to protect long-term biological productivity and diversity and watershed values.

5.3.2.7 Noxious Weed Control

The BLM will work with county, state, and federal agencies to monitor the locations and spread of noxious weeds. Noxious weed control will be conducted in accordance with the integrated weed management guidelines and design features identified in the Burns District Noxious Weed Management Program. The BLM will assess land prior to acquisition to determine if noxious weeds are present.

5.3.2.8 Special Status Species

The BLM is mandated by law to assist in the conservation and recovery of species listed as Threatened or Endangered or proposed for listing under the ESA. Federal actions that may affect these species require consultation with the USFWS. BLM policy requires that authorized actions do not contribute to the need to list species as threatened or endangered.

5.3.2.9 Wild Horses

Forage will be provided to support wild horse populations at levels established in accordance with the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act. Adjustments in range allocation will be based on monitoring to ensure a thriving natural ecological balance within HMAs.

5.3.2.10 Grazing Management

Grazing of public land will be authorized under the principles of multiple-use and sustained yield. Livestock will be managed to maintain or improve public land resources and rangeland productivity and to stabilize the livestock industry dependent on the public range over the long term. Forage will be allocated by allotment for livestock grazing on suitable rangeland based on multiple-use and sustained yield objectives. Existing management systems, including those outlined in AMPs, will continue until evaluations indicate that change is needed to meet objectives.

The process for determining livestock forage allocations through allotment evaluations will proceed in accordance with BLM regulations and policy.

5.3.2.11 Fire Management

Wildland fire will be integrated into land and resource management planning to help achieve resource management objectives. The use of surface-disturbing equipment to suppress wildland fires will be restricted in Steens Mountain Wilderness, WSAs, and areas containing significant cultural or paleontological values, except when needed to protect human life or property. Public land affected by fire will be managed in accordance with multiple-use objectives.

5.3.2.12 Land Tenure Adjustments

BLM administered land will be retained in public ownership unless disposal of a particular parcel will serve the public interest. Land may be identified for disposal by sale, exchange, state indemnity selection or other authorized methods. Land will be identified for acquisition based on public benefits, management considerations, and public access needs. Specific actions meeting land tenure adjustment criteria as established in the RMP/EIS will occur with public participation and will be made in consultation with local, county, state, and tribal governments.

5.3.2.13 Rights-of-Way and Land Use Authorizations

Public land will generally be available for land use authorizations including transportation and utility ROWs with preference given to existing corridors. Exceptions will include areas specifically prohibited by law or regulation (e.g., wilderness) and specific areas identified to protect resource values.

5.3.2.14 Energy and Minerals

Except where specifically withdrawn, public land will be available for energy and mineral exploration and development, subject to applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

5.3.2.15 Recreation

All public land will be within Special Recreation Management Areas or Extensive Recreation Management Areas. Some areas may be subject to special measures to protect resources or reduce conflicts among uses. Where there is a demonstrated need, the BLM may develop and maintain recreation facilities including campgrounds, picnic areas, interpretive sites, boat access, and trails.

5.3.2.16 Off Highway Vehicles

All public land will be designated as open, limited or closed for OHV use. Public safety, resource protection, user access needs, and conflict resolution will be considered in assigning these designations.

5.3.2.17 Visual Resources

The BLM will manage public land to protect the quality of scenic (visual) values in accordance with established guidelines. All public land will be designated as VRM Class I, II, III or IV.

5.3.2.18 Wild and Scenic Rivers

As required by law, streams will be evaluated for addition to the National Wild and Scenic River System. The evaluation will be conducted according to BLM Manual Section 8351 - Wild and Scenic Rivers - Policy and Program Direction for Identification, Evaluation and Management. Designated WSRs will be managed in accordance with laws and existing plans.

5.3.2.19 Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas

Wilderness will be managed according to the Wilderness Act and wilderness regulations. WSAs designated under authority of FLPMA, Sections 603 and 202, will be managed in accordance with the BLM Interim Management Policy for lands under wilderness review. This planning effort will not reopen the initial wilderness review mandated by Section 603 of FLPMA, and it will not change existing decisions, signed by the Secretary of the Interior, to recommend areas as suitable for wilderness designation. New areas could be inventoried for wilderness characteristics during the planning process. Any new wilderness inventories and studies will be conducted under the authority of Sections 201 and 202 of FLPMA.

5.3.2.20 Cultural and Paleontological Resources

Cultural and paleontological resources will be managed to maintain or enhance scientific, interpretive, and educational values. Cultural resources will be managed to protect American Indian interests where possible.

5.3.2.21 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

ACECs will be designated where special management attention is required to protect historical, cultural, or scenic values; natural resources or processes; or human life and safety. Management requirements for ACECs will be identified in the RMP/EIS.

5.3.3 **Planning Criteria for Selecting an Alternative**

In selecting the preferred alternative in the resource management plan, the BLM will consider:

- Achievement of management goals and issue resolution;
- Discretionary limits of applicable laws, regulations, and agency policies;
- Options for reasonable, feasible, and practical management of public lands and resources; and
- Adequacy for a complete land use plan.

5.4 **Alternative Formulations**

A range of alternatives, including a No Action Alternative, will be developed to address issues identified initially and from public scoping. Each alternative will provide different solutions to the issues and concerns. The objective in alternative formulation will be to develop realistic solutions. Some subalternatives may be identified where only parts of an alternative require variations in possible resource management. Due to the mandates of the Act, the Steens Mountain CMPA and the Andrews MU may require differing alternative formulations.

Preliminary alternatives to be formulated for the Plan include the following:

5.4.1 **Alternative A**

This Alternative would continue the present management strategies while meeting the legislative requirements for the RMP as mandated by P.L. 106-399 and other laws and regulations.

(The No Action Alternative is not viable for mandates of the Act.) This alternative continues implementation of the Andrews MFP and incorporates the decisions in the Andrews Grazing Management EIS and Rangeland Program Summary as well as all decisions subsequent to the MFP.

5.4.2 **Alternative B**

This Alternative would maximize the enhancement and protection of the Planning Area's natural, cultural, scenic, and wilderness resources, and would emphasize natural values and the functioning of natural systems. Commodity production would be substantially constrained to protect sensitive resources or accelerate improvement in their condition.

5.4.3 Alternative C

This Alternative would maximize commodity production opportunities available in the Planning Area while providing the legally required protection for the Area's SMAs and other natural resources. Restraint on commodity production to protect sensitive resources would be minimally restrictive within the limits defined by law, regulation, and BLM policy. Potential impacts to sensitive resource values would be mitigated on a case-by-case basis.

5.4.4 Alternative D

This Alternative would balance natural resource protection and commodity production required by public land users. Constraints on commodity production would be implemented to protect sensitive resources, but would not be as minimal as in Alternative C or as stringent as in Alternative B.

6 SUBBASIN REVIEW REPORT

6.1 Introduction

“The Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project (ICBEMP) was established in 1994...to develop and then adopt a scientifically sound ecosystem based strategy for managing all USFS or BLM administered lands within the (Interior Columbia) Basin.” (Status of the Interior Columbia Basin, Summary of Scientific Findings [USFS 1996]). The ICBEMP covered an area of 145 million acres, 53 percent of which is public land managed by the BLM or the USFS. The size of this area requires some means to bring findings and information down to a level where they can be applied in a USFS or BLM management unit such as a ranger district or resource area. A process was developed with which the pertinent information could be “stepped down” to the local management level. This is called the subbasin review process.

In anticipation of preparing a comprehensive RMP/EIS, the Burns DO collected a considerable amount of data and information about the resources on BLM administered lands. Much of this information was in GIS format. Data and information needed for the resources in the subbasin review area and from other agencies were identified prior to preparation of the AMS/subbasin review.

6.2 Issues and Findings

Broad-scale information from the ICBEMP provides a general characterization of the Planning Area subbasin review area relative to the rest of the Interior Columbia Basin. The broad-scale information indicates that essentially 100 percent of this subbasin review area is rangeland. Rangeland in the subbasin review area is classified as low integrity. The rangeland is described as being dominated by dry shrubland vegetation that is highly sensitive to overgrazing and susceptible to invasion by noxious weeds. Hydrologic integrity is low to moderate and the integrity of riparian environments is commonly low. Some native fish species occur in highly fragmented habitat.

The conditions described above significantly increase the subbasins' susceptibility to wildland fire, insects and disease, soil erosion, loss of native species, and other problems that threaten ecological integrity, water quality, species recovery, timber and forage production, and other uses of public lands (Integrated Scientific Assessment for Ecosystem Management in the Interior Columbia Basin, USFS, BLM 1996).

The following potential issues were identified by the Burns DO prior to the beginning of the subbasin review process. These will be addressed in the RMP/EIS, pending any changes.

1) **How will the BLM manage resource uses to improve and maintain the integrity of upland ecological communities?**

- How will livestock grazing be managed to sustain resource values while maintaining stable watersheds and the continued production of forage?
- What areas previously ungrazed could be grazed and under what circumstances? Are there areas where, or situations when, grazing should be excluded?
- What practices will be authorized and implemented to provide wildlife habitat and forage for livestock while maintaining other uses and values of public land resources?
- Under what conditions is grazing compatible with management of SMAs such as WSAs, WSRs, and ACECs?
- What are the visual considerations relating to upland conditions, and how will the BLM's VRM play a role?
- What indicators will be used to identify levels of wild horse use compatible with sustaining a thriving, natural, ecological balance?
- What practices will the BLM implement to manage wild horses consistent with the legislative mandate that all management activities be at minimum feasible level?
- What practices will be authorized and implemented to provide adequate habitat and forage for wildlife while maintaining other resource uses and values?
- What grazing practices are necessary to protect sensitive resource values such as riparian areas and special status species?
- What new and existing rangeland projects, including seedings, are needed to improve rangeland resource values?
- What rehabilitation practices will be implemented following rangeland project construction and maintenance that disturbs established vegetation cover?
- What criteria should be considered for fire rehabilitation, for restoration of wildlife habitat, and to determine whether or not native or introduced species should be seeded to stabilize watersheds?

- How should the BLM prioritize implementation of management practices to maintain desired conditions and improve undesirable conditions where feasible?
- What criteria should be established to determine conditions and timetables for improvements?
- What resource uses and management practices will be employed in geographic areas with lower management priority?
- Is the current strategy of full wildland fire suppression compatible with upland management objectives?
How, and to what extent, should fire be used to manage western juniper and aspen woodlands?
- Can cottonwood stands be restored along Donner und Blitzen WSR and the east side of Steens Mountain?
- Can juniper treatments in corridors be accomplished?

2) How will the BLM manage resource uses to improve or maintain the integrity of riparian ecological communities?

- How will riparian vegetation communities be managed to improve or maintain ecological condition, species diversity, bank stability, water quality, and the timing of watershed discharge while providing for resource uses such as grazing, recreation, water development, mineral exploration and development, and woodland products harvest?
- What areas previously excluded from grazing could be grazed and under what circumstances? Are there areas or situations when grazing should be excluded?
- What are the visual considerations relating to riparian conditions, and how will the BLM's VRM play a role?
- How will riparian systems be managed to improve or maintain habitat quality for fish, wildlife, plants, and invertebrates?
- How will riparian and wetland areas be managed to incorporate State of Oregon water quality standards and approved management plans addressing water quality concerns?
- Is the current strategy of full wildland fire suppression compatible with riparian management objectives?
- How will management actions in upland communities be handled to be compatible with the needs of riparian communities?

- How should management actions with potential to affect riparian communities be identified and prioritized?
- What timeframes are acceptable to achieve riparian management objectives?
- When does the establishment of juniper threaten other resource values, and what management actions can be used to control the invasion?
- Is collection of baseline riparian information and PFC on acquired and isolated stream segments necessary?
- Should the riparian habitat inventory be redone?

3) How will the BLM maintain or improve woodland communities and how will woodlands be managed to maintain or improve rangeland and wildlife habitat?

- What should be done to preserve and manage the 20.1 acres of grand fir forested areas on public land on Steens Mountain?
- Are there juniper woodland areas that should be preserved?
- What types of woodland products should be harvested?
- What are the potential effects of woodland management on wildlife, watersheds, soils, vegetation, recreation, aesthetics, and other resources?
- What kind of woodland management is compatible with management of Wilderness, ACECs, WSRs, and other SMAs?

4) How will the BLM provide for wildlife habitat while considering other resource uses?

- To what extent will livestock management and brush control be conducted to meet the habitat requirements of wildlife?
- Which areas, if any, are appropriate for reintroduction of wildlife, and what species could be reintroduced?
- What management practices avoid conflicts between wildlife and livestock for vegetation, especially between bighorn sheep and domestic sheep?
- What are the long-term strategies for managing wildlife?
- To what extent will the BLM adopt ODFW management objectives for game and nongame species of wildlife?

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- What management practices best address areas of biodiversity, the needs of species at the limits of their range, and species assemblages?
- 5) **How can public land management contribute to the preservation of and increase in healthy, sustainable populations of species now considered in Special status? How can land management successfully prevent habitat destruction which would lead to listing of additional species?**
- To what extent will livestock management and brush control be conducted to meet the habitat requirements of Special status species?
 - Which areas, if any, are appropriate for reintroduction of Special status species?
 - What are the long-term strategies for managing habitat for Special status species?
 - To what extent will the BLM adopt ODFW management objectives for Special status species?
 - What management practices best address areas of biodiversity, the needs of Special status species at the limits of their range, and species assemblages?
- 6) **How will BLM manage energy and mineral resources on public land?**
- Are there areas where some types of energy and mineral development should be restricted or prohibited?
 - Are there areas where mineral development should be recognized as being the highest and best use?
 - How will energy and mineral development be managed to minimize resource conflicts?
 - What are the visual considerations relating to management of energy and mineral resources, and how will the BLM's VRM play a role?
 - How should recreational rock collecting be managed?
 - What reclamation practices will be implemented following mineral development activities?
 - Which remediation methods should be used for each identified abandoned mine site?
 - What leasing stipulations will be applied to the area outside of the mineral withdrawal?
- 7) **How will SMAs be managed within the Steens Mountain CMPA and in the Andrews MU?**
- Should existing ACECs be retained under their current designations and management prescriptions?
 - Are there other areas that warrant special designations to protect unique or special values?
 - Would designating new SMAs or eliminating existing SMAs affect other resource values or management?
 - How will impacts from nonconforming but acceptable uses and administrative needs in the Wilderness Area be managed in order to meet objectives but also preserve wilderness character?
 - How will wilderness values be protected against the impacts of unauthorized uses such as OHV use and other mechanized or motorized transport?
 - What management actions are needed to protect and preserve wilderness values while offering opportunities for quality recreational experiences?
 - Where and under what conditions will access be permitted to provide reasonable use and enjoyment of private land within wilderness?
 - How will WSRs be managed as they relate to wilderness or other SMAs?
 - How will the Historic District be managed with the continuing interest and visitation from the public?
 - What preventive measures will need to be in place to successfully manage the No Livestock Grazing Area?
 - How will the removal of livestock from the No Livestock Grazing Area affect natural ecological processes?
 - What management actions will be introduced to control the spread of western juniper and rejuvenate depleted aspen stands in the WJMA?
 - How will the RTR be managed to protect the habitat for the fish and provide for research and education opportunities?
 - How will land acquired subsequent to the Oregon Wilderness Inventory/EIS, and determined to contain wilderness characteristics, be managed?
- 8) **How should the BLM manage wildland fire, fuels, and prescribed fire to meet and be consistent with resource objectives, while protecting life and property? How can BLM and private landowners work together to manage wildland fires?**

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- While the BLM continues to protect life, property, and important resources from fire, are there areas where Appropriate Management Response strategies should be implemented? If so, where and under what conditions would these strategies be applied?
 - Which areas are appropriate for using prescribed/wildland fire as a management tool? How would this tool be used?
 - Which areas may be subject to constraints (e.g., ODEQ air quality standards) that could limit the use of prescribed fire?
 - Which areas should continue to have full suppression to protect important values?
 - What rehabilitation practices would be implemented following fire?
- 9) **How should the BLM manage recreation opportunities for both developed and dispersed recreation uses while meeting other resource objectives?**
- What types and levels of recreation should the Planning Area provide?
 - How, when, and to what extent should the BLM enhance recreation opportunities?
 - What conflicts with resource values or other uses would restrict recreation opportunities?
 - How should the BLM address Special Recreation Permits and any needed allocations?
 - Would changes in existing OHV designations affect recreation opportunities?
 - To what extent should the BLM develop facilities (campgrounds, trails, etc.) and generally improve recreation access opportunities to meet public demand, to provide for public health and safety, and to direct use away from areas of conflict?
 - What role, if any, should the BLM serve in encouraging tourism?
 - How should the BLM provide for public awareness of recreation resources and opportunities?
- 10) **How should the BLM administer land status and values to improve management efficiency and cooperation with private landowners?**
- Should some BLM administered land in the Planning Area be exchanged for other land with high public value if the exchange is consistent with the land tenure objectives of the BLM? If so, which land should be exchanged?
- What effect does the Oregon Division of State Land's (ODSL's) "Asset Management Strategy" have on management of public land?
 - Should some federal agency withdrawals be considered for revocation?
 - What land should be returned to BLM administration?
 - Should state or other non-federal mineral estates under public surface ownership be acquired through mineral estate exchanges?
 - Where should the BLM consider exchanging BLM administered land for other land with higher public values or consider selling isolated or difficult-to-manage land? Should the BLM consider selling land for public purposes and community expansion?
 - What areas within the Planning Area should be identified as unsuitable for rights-of-way routes for major utilities and roads?
 - What areas within the Planning Area should be identified as open for ROWs or other land use authorizations?
 - What mitigation measures would be appropriate for land that is suitable for rights-of-way routes?
 - Which land in the Planning Area should have current withdrawals or classifications revoked, continued or modified? Which land in the Planning Area not currently withdrawn should be withdrawn in order to protect Planning Area resources?
 - Where should utility corridors, avoidance, and exclusion areas be designated?
 - Is there land within the Planning Area that should be identified for retention, acquisition or sale, exchange or other disposal in order to address management objectives and issues?
 - What criteria should be applied when considering acquisition from willing sellers of non-federal land to be added to the Planning Area?
 - Are there public lands that are more suitable for administration by other Federal, State or local agencies?
- 11) **How will wild horses in the HMAs be managed to maintain a sustainable, viable, healthy population and exist in a thriving, natural, ecological balance with their habitat and other multiple uses of the area?**

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- How do goals and objectives of the Steens Mountain CMPA affect the management of HMAs and wild horse populations?
 - Should the existing AMLs for HMAs inside the Steens Mountain CMPA boundary be changed considering the following:
 - reduced acreage within the HMAs,
 - impacts of existing and potential fencing (inside the HMA) to implement the Act's No Livestock Grazing Area,
 - potential impacts of fence removal within the HMAs,
 - potential impacts of fence additions in the HMA and outside of the No Livestock Grazing Area, or
 - potential impacts of less water being available to horses in the area west of the No Livestock Grazing Area?
 - Should the Alvord-Tule Springs and Coyote Lakes HMAs be combined and the herds managed as one population?
 - Are past decisions and current management practices regarding HMAs and Herd Areas within the Planning Area still valid?
- 12) How will significant cultural sites and localities be managed to ensure their protection and preservation? Where and how will interpretation be used as an education tool to increase the public's awareness and appreciation of the Planning Area's cultural resources? How will the BLM gain the scientific information forming the basis of this interpretation? How will American Indian interests, traditional religious sites, land forms and resources be considered and protected?**
- How can cultural and paleontology inventories (beyond project specific clearances) be focused primarily on areas most likely to contain significant intact properties most susceptible to impacts such as erosion, livestock trampling, OHV use, artifact looting, and concentrated recreation use?
 - How can sites and localities be evaluated for significance and managed as such, given time frames and constraints imposed by the needs of other resource management?
 - Can all data pertaining to sites and localities continue to be successfully tracked in an automated data base?
- Can cost-share agreements with universities, research teams, undergraduate and graduate students, and the tribes continue to be implemented to gain scientific and cultural information that will form the basis for interpretation?
 - Will resources, both internal and external, be available for BLM cultural personnel to gain the training and experience required to make oral and written interpretive presentations as well as to prepare design and construction of interpretative panels and facilities?
 - Will active consultation with Indian tribes be ongoing and continue to establish baseline data for traditional religious sites and use areas?
 - Will a Planning Area tribal use plan be developed by the BLM with cooperation of the various tribes, and would it increase coordination with tribes?
- 13) How are noxious weeds to be controlled and eradicated?**
- Should the Burns District's Noxious Weed Management Program Environmental Assessment (EA) (EA OR-020-98-05) continue to be implemented in its present form or should it be evaluated and modified if necessary?
 - How will management of noxious weeds in SMAs (including Wilderness) be successfully conducted within the restraints required by the guidelines and requirements of those SMAs?
 - Can data in the District weed data base be successfully broken out, summarized, and utilized specific to the Planning Area?
 - Can the BLM effectively increase cooperative work with other agencies to monitor locations and spread of weeds? If so, how can this be accomplished?
- 14) How will OHV use be managed in the Planning Area?**
- What criteria will be used to determine if current and future OHV use is compatible with OHV designations in the existing BLM OHV strategy?
 - What criteria will be used to determine if OHV use is causing "considerable adverse effects" to Planning Area resources?
 - What changes should occur to current OHV designations if determined to be incompatible with the current BLM OHV Strategy or Planning Area objectives?
-

15) How will the BLM manage resource uses to improve unacceptable aquatic habitat and water quality conditions (such as stream reaches listed as Water Quality Limited (303(d)) by ODEQ) or maintain aquatic habitat and water quality that are currently in acceptable conditions?

- Do water developments/alternative water developments (reservoirs, springs) need to have application made to the state for water rights? (For smaller water developments, the lag time will be approximately seven months to gain certificate.)
- Will workload and water quality monitoring objectives need to be determined under new management priorities? As the upper Donner und Blitzen drainage area is under new management strategies, should the BLM take steps to get the tributaries and mainstream delisted from 303(d), or should the state focus on these areas?
- To what extent will livestock management and brush control be conducted to meet fisheries habitat requirements?
- What management practices for range and woodlands accommodate fisheries habitat requirements?
- Which areas, if any, are appropriate for reintroduction of native fish species?
- What are the long-term strategies for managing fisheries?
- To what extent will the BLM adopt ODFW management objectives for fisheries?
- What management practices best address areas of biodiversity, the needs of species at the limits of their range, and species assemblages?
- How can grazing management techniques improve water quality?

16) How should the BLM manage transportation issues in the Planning Area?

- What roads and trails are needed for administrative use and/or public access?
- Where are easements or other use agreements needed to ensure future access?
- Which roads and trails should be open or closed to motorized vehicles or limited to non-motorized, non-mechanical traffic, and where?
- Which roads or trails should be seasonally closed for protection and/or improvement of resources or for public safety, and where?
- To what standards should roads and trails be maintained?

- Can roads or trails that no longer serve management purposes be abandoned and/or reclaimed?
- Should new roads or trails be considered to provide access to important public resources, prevent environmental degradation, or to improve transportation?
- What existing roads are needed to provide reasonable access to private land or areas involving other private rights or interests?
- What areas may need new roads to provide future private access?

17) Would changes in current resource uses and management practices affect the economic and social status of rural communities in the Planning Area? If so, how?

- How can public land management contribute to the economic stability of small rural communities in the Planning Area?
- How would changing land use and tourism affect traditional rural life styles?
- How would land tenure adjustments affect the economic stability of small rural communities in the Planning Area?
- How, and to what extent, will the creation of the Steens Mountain specially designated areas impact communities and residents?

The aforementioned mid-scale issues generally reflect many of the broad-scale findings in the ICBEMP scientific assessment.

After identifying the potential issues the group then examined the list of findings in "Using Key Broad-scale Findings in Mid-scale Issue Identification" documented in the ICBEMP Scientific Assessment (Quigley and Arbelbide 1997) and EIS. The participants determined that many of the findings applied to the Planning Area subbasin review area. Some of the findings were modified to more accurately reflect conditions within the Planning Area subbasin review. Some of the findings or conditions were considered not applicable to the Planning Area subbasin review. Either the resources did not occur in the area or conditions were known to be better than indicated in the ICBEMP findings.

The findings dealt primarily with terrestrial and aquatic habitat, water quality, riparian health, landscape health, and social and economic concerns including tribal rights. The group then developed the refined list of broad scale findings. These were discussed and small changes were made. Several findings dealt with

designated priority issues including noxious weed and juniper expansion, water quality, special status species management, aquatic habitat, and riparian and wetland vegetation.

6.3 Revised List of Key Broad-Scale Findings Used in Issue Identification for the Andrews MU/Steens Mountain CMPA Subbasin Review Area

These findings are from *Ecosystem Review at the Subbasin Scale (Subbasin Review), Volume 1 - The Process*, August 1999, Appendix A. As stated above, some findings have been modified to more accurately reflect conditions within the Planning Area subbasin review. The ICBEMP did not address issues related to current management practices on cultural resources, including archaeological and Native American traditional values, and are therefore not addressed in this section.

6.3.1 Terrestrial Habitat/Landscape Health

6.3.1.1 Rangelands

Noxious weeds are spreading on roadway disturbance.

Woody species encroachment by and/or increasing density of woody species (sagebrush and juniper), especially on dry grasslands and cool shrublands, has reduced herbaceous understory and biodiversity.

Cheatgrass has taken over many dry shrublands, increasing soil erosion and fire frequency and reducing biodiversity and wildlife habitat. Cheatgrass and other exotic plant infestations have simplified species composition, reduced biodiversity, changed species interactions and forage availability, and reduced the systems' ability to buffer against changes.

Expansion of agricultural and urban areas on non-federal lands has reduced the extent of some rangeland potential vegetation groups, most notably dry grasslands, dry shrublands, and riparian areas. Changes in some of the remaining habitat patches and loss of native species diversity have contributed to a number of wildlife species declines, some to the point of special concern (such as sage-grouse, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, California bighorn sheep, pygmy rabbit, kit fox, and Washington ground squirrel).

Increased fragmentation and loss of connectivity within and between blocks of habitat, especially in shrub steppe and riparian areas, have isolated some habitats and populations and reduced the ability of populations

to move across the landscape, resulting in long-term loss of genetic interchange.

Slow-to-recover rangelands (in general, rangelands that receive less than 12 inches of precipitation per year) are not recovering naturally at a pace that is acceptable to the general public, and are either highly susceptible to degradation or already dominated by cheatgrass and noxious weeds.

Fire frequency has decreased in many locations resulting in an increase in conifer encroachment; an increase in tree density in formerly savanna-like stands of juniper; and increased density and/or coverage of big sagebrush and other shrubs, with an accompanying loss of herbaceous vegetation.

Fire frequency has increased in some areas, particularly in drier locations where exotic annual grasses have become established. Increased fire frequency has caused a loss of shrub cover and reduction in bunchgrasses.

6.3.1.2 Forests

Interior ponderosa pine has decreased across its range with a significant decrease in old single story structure. The primary transitions were to interior Douglas fir and grand fir/white fir.

There has been a loss of the large tree component (live and dead) within roaded and harvested areas. This decrease affects terrestrial wildlife species that are closely associated with these old forest structures.

Western larch has decreased across its range. The primary transitions were to interior Douglas fir, lodgepole pine, or grand fir/white fir.

Western white pine has decreased by 95 percent across its range. The primary transitions were to grand fir/white fir, western larch, and shrub/herb/tree regeneration.

The whitebark pine/alpine larch potential vegetation type has decreased by 95 percent across its range, primarily through a transition into the whitebark pine cover type. Overall, however, the whitebark pine cover stand has also decreased, with compensating increases in Engelmann spruce/subalpine fir.

Generally, mid-seral forest structures have increased in dry and moist forest potential vegetation groups (PVG), with a loss of large, scattered, and residual shade-intolerant tree components, and an increase in the density of smaller shade-tolerant diameter trees.

There has been an increase in fragmentation and a loss of connectivity within and between blocks of late-seral, old forests, especially in lower elevation forests and riparian areas. This has isolated some animal habitats and populations and reduced the ability of populations to move across the landscape, resulting in a long-term loss of genetic interchange.

Habitat for several forest carnivores and omnivores is in decline.

Insects and diseases always existed in forests, but the size and intensity of their attacks has increased in recent years due to increased stand density.

Dry forests have had an increase in fuel loading, duff depth, stand density, and a fuel ladder that can carry fire from the surface into the tree crowns. As a result, wildfire intensity has increased.

Noxious weeds are spreading rapidly, and in some cases exponentially, in most dry forest types.

6.3.2 Aquatic Habitat/Landscape Health

6.3.2.1 Hydrology and Watershed Processes

- Management activities throughout watersheds in the Planning Area have affected the quantity and quality of water, processes of sedimentation and erosion, and the production and distribution of organic material, thus affecting hydrologic conditions.

6.3.2.2 Source Habitat

Source habitats for the majority of species in the basin declined strongly (>20 percent decline) from historical to current.

The strongest declines were for species dependent on low-elevation, old-forest habitats, species dependent on combinations of rangeland or early-seral forests with late-seral forests, and species dependent on native grassland and open canopy sagebrush habitats.

Primary causes of decline in old-forest habitats and early-seral habitats are intensive timber harvest and large-scale fir exclusion.

Primary causes for decline in native herbland, woodland, grassland, and sagebrush habitats are excessive livestock grazing, invasion of exotic plants, and conversion of land to agriculture, residential, and urban development. Altered fire regimes have also

contributed to a decline in grassland and shrubland habitats.

A variety of road-associated factors negatively affect habitats or populations of many species.

Human interactions with wide-ranging carnivores are generally negative and large areas of the basin may not be used by wide-ranging carnivores; because of this, habitats for many riparian dependent terrestrial species, especially shrubland habitats, have declined.

Snag and down wood habitats in managed woodland and riparian areas have declined.

6.3.2.3 Streams, Rivers and Lakes

Banks and beds of streams, rivers, and lakes have been altered. In general, the changes have been greatest for the larger streams, rivers, and lakes.

Water quantity and flow rates have been locally affected.

Many BLM administered streams are “water quality limited” as defined by the Clean Water Act. On Forest Service-administered lands, the primary water quality problems are sedimentation, turbidity, flow alteration, and elevated temperatures. On BLM administered lands, sedimentation, turbidity, and elevated temperatures are the primary reasons for listing as water quality limited.

Streams and rivers are highly variable across the project area, reflecting diverse physical settings and disturbance histories. Nevertheless, important aspects of fish habitat, such as pool frequency and large woody debris abundance, have decreased throughout much of the project area.

6.3.2.4 Riparian Areas and Wetlands

The overall extent and continuity of riparian areas and wetlands has decreased.

Riparian ecosystem function, has decreased in most subbasins within the project area.

A majority of riparian areas on BLM administered lands are either “not meeting objectives,” “non-functioning,” or “functioning at risk.” However, the rate has slowed and a few areas show increases in riparian cover and large trees.

Within riparian woodlands, the abundance of mid-seral vegetation has increased, whereas the abundance of late and early seral structural stages has decreased.

Within riparian shrublands, there has been extensive spread of western juniper and introduction of exotic grasses and forbs.

The frequency and extent of seasonal floodplain and wetland inundation has been altered by changes in flow regime, and by changes in channel morphology.

There is an overall decrease in large trees and late seral vegetation in riparian areas.

Riparian areas are important for about three quarters of the terrestrial wildlife species. Wildlife numbers have declined in proportion to the decline in riparian habitat conditions.

6.3.2.5 Fish

The composition, distribution, and status of fishes within the Planning Area are substantially different than they were historically. Some native fishes have been eliminated from large portions of their historical ranges.

Some native nongame fish are vulnerable because of their restricted distribution or fragile or unique habitats.

Although several of the key salmonids are still broadly distributed (notably the cutthroat trouts and redband trout), declines in abundance, loss of life history patterns, local extinctions, and fragmentation and isolation in smaller blocks of high quality habitat are apparent.

Wild chinook salmon and steelhead are near extinction in a major part of their remaining distribution.

Core areas for rebuilding and maintaining biological diversity associated with native fishes still exist within the basin.

6.3.3 **Landscape Health**

6.3.3.1 Air Quality

The current condition of air quality in the project area is considered good, relative to other areas of the country.

Wildland fires significantly affect the air resources. Current wildland fires produce higher levels of smoke emissions than historically. Within the project area, the

current trend in prescribed fire use is expected to result in an increase of smoke emissions.

6.3.4 **Social/Economic**

6.3.4.1 Human Uses and Values

The Planning Area is sparsely populated and rural, especially in areas with a large amount of agency lands.

Development for a growing human population is encroaching on previously undeveloped areas adjacent to lands administered by the BLM. New development can put stress on the political and physical infrastructure of rural communities, diminish habitat for some wildlife, and increase agency costs to manage fire to protect people and structures.

Recreation is an important use of agency lands in the Planning Area in terms of economic value and amount of use. Most recreation use is tied to roads and accessible water bodies, though primitive and semi-primitive recreation is also important.

Industries customarily served by agency land uses, such as logging, wood products manufacturing and livestock grazing, no longer dictate the economic prosperity of the region, but remain economically and culturally important in rural areas. The economic dependence of communities on these industries is highest in areas that are geographically isolated and offer few alternative employment opportunities.

The public, including individuals and Harney County through gross receipts sharing, has invested substantial land and capital to develop road systems on agency lands, primarily to serve commodity uses.

For those counties that have benefitted from federal sharing of gross receipts from commodity sales on agency lands, changing levels of commodity outputs can affect county budgets.

Agency social and economic policy has emphasized the goal of supporting rural communities, specifically promoting stability in those communities deemed dependent on agency timber harvest and processing. Even-flow of timber sales, timber sale bidding methods, timber export restrictions, and small business set asides of timber sales have been the major policy tools on Forest Service-administered commercial forestlands. Regulation of grazing practices has been important on BLM administered rangelands.

The factors that appear to help make communities resilient to economic and social change include

population size and growth rate, economic diversity, social and cultural attributes, amenity setting, and quality of life. The ability of agencies to improve community resiliency depends on the effectiveness of agency land uses and management strategies to positively influence these factors.

Predictability in timber sale volume from agency lands has been increasingly difficult to achieve. Advancing knowledge of ecosystem processes, changing societal goals, and changing forest conditions has undermined conventional assumptions underlying the quantity and regularity of timber supply from agency lands.

Lands now administered by the BLM make up the traditional homelands of affected American Indian Tribes. Land management actions and decisions on these lands affect the rights and/or interests of these tribes and their members.

American Indian tribes in the Basin depend on lands and resources administered by the BLM for a myriad of needs and uses ranging from subsistence uses and economic purposes to religious and cultural purposes.

Agency social and economic policy has emphasized the goal of supporting rural communities, including tribal communities. The ability of agencies to assist tribal members and tribal communities depends on the effectiveness of agency land uses and management strategies to positively consider and influence these factors (tribal employment, subsistence, treaty/reserved rights, spiritual, cultural/social purposes).

6.3.4.2 American Indian Rights and Interests

There is low confidence and trust that American Indian rights and interests are considered when decisions are proposed and made for actions to be taken on BLM administered lands.

American Indian values on federal lands may be affected by proposed actions on woodlands and rangelands because of changes in vegetation structure, composition, and density; existing roads; and watershed conditions.

Indian tribes do not feel that they are involved in the decision-making process commensurate with their legal status. They do not feel that government-to-government consultation is taking place.

Culturally significant species such as anadromous fish and the habitat necessary to support healthy, sustainable, and harvest able populations constitute a major, but not the only, concern. American Indian

people have concern for all factors that keep the ecosystem healthy.

6.4 Findings from the ICBEMP Scientific Assessment Not Applicable to the Andrews Management Unit/Steens Mountain CMPA Subbasin Review Area

Following is a description of ICBEMP broad-scale findings determined by the BLM team to be not applicable to the subbasin review area. The reasons why the findings are not applicable are given.

Finding: Noxious weeds are spreading rapidly, and in some cases exponentially, on rangelands in every range cluster.

Response: Noxious weeds, although present on the Planning Area, are not spreading rapidly in every range cluster and the Burns BLM has implemented an integrated weed management program.

Finding: Expansion of agricultural and urban areas on non-federal lands has reduced the extent of some rangeland potential vegetation groups, most notably dry grasslands, dry shrublands, and riparian areas. Changes in some of the remaining habitat patches and loss of native species diversity have contributed to a number of wildlife species declines, some to the point of special concern (such as sage-grouse, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, California bighorn sheep, pygmy rabbit, kit fox, and Washington ground squirrel).

Response: The Planning Area has not experienced expansion of agricultural and urban areas on non-federal lands.

Finding: Increased fragmentation and loss of connectivity within and between blocks of habitat, especially in shrub steppe and riparian areas, have isolated some habitats and populations and reduced the ability of populations to move across the landscape, resulting in long-term loss of genetic interchange.

Response: There has not been fragmentation and loss of habitat connectivity in the Planning Area; in fact, the BLM has acquired parcels for incorporation into contiguous lands under BLM administration, which increases habitat connectivity.

Finding: Fire frequency has decreased in many locations resulting in an increase in conifer encroachment; an increase in tree density in formerly savanna-like stands of juniper and ponderosa pine; and increased density and/or coverage of big sagebrush and

other shrubs, with an accompanying loss of herbaceous vegetation.

Response: Conifers are not readily present in the Planning Area and are not encroaching.

Finding: Interior ponderosa pine has decreased across its range with a significant decrease in old single story structure. The primary transitions were to interior Douglas fir and grand fir/white fir.

Response: Ponderosa pine has not occurred historically and does not presently occur within the Planning Area.

Finding: There has been a loss of the large tree component (live and dead) within roaded and harvested areas. This decrease affects terrestrial wildlife species that are closely associated with these old forest structures.

Response: The Planning Area is not forested; therefore, a loss of large trees has not occurred.

Finding: Western larch has decreased across its range. The primary transitions were to interior Douglas fir, lodgepole pine, or grand fir/white fir.

Response: Western larch has not occurred historically and does not presently occur within the Andrews MU/Steens Mountain CMPA subbasin review area.

Finding: Western white pine has decreased by 95 percent across its range. The primary transitions were to grand fir/white fir, western larch, and shrub/herb/tree regeneration.

Response: The Planning Area contains a very small (approximately 40 acres) stand of white fir and it has not changed substantially in size

Finding: The whitebark pine/alpine larch potential vegetation type has decreased by 95 percent across its range, primarily through a transition into the whitebark pine cover type. Overall, however, the whitebark pine cover stand has also decreased, with compensating increases in Engelmann spruce/subalpine fir.

Response: Whitebark pine/alpine larch potential vegetation type has not occurred historically and does not presently occur within the Andrews MU/Steens Mountain CMPA subbasin review area.

Finding: Generally, mid-seral forest structures have increased in dry and moist forest PVGs, with a loss of large, scattered, and residual shade-intolerant tree

components, and an increase in the density of smaller shade-tolerant diameter trees.

Response: The Planning Area does not have forest habitat.

Finding: There has been an increase in fragmentation and a loss of connectivity within and between blocks of late-seral, old forests, especially in lower elevation forests and riparian areas. This has isolated some animal habitats and populations and reduced the ability of populations to move across the landscape, resulting in a long-term loss of genetic interchange.

Response: The Planning Area does not contain old-growth forests.

Finding: Habitat for several forest carnivores and omnivores is in decline.

Response: The Planning Area does not have forest habitat.

Finding: Insects and diseases always existed in forests, but the size and intensity of their attacks has increased in recent years due to increased stand density.

Response: The Planning Area does not have forest habitat.

Finding: Dry forests have had an increase in fuel loading, duff depth, stand density, and a fuel ladder that can carry fire from the surface into the tree crowns. As a result, wildfire intensity has increased.

Response: The Planning Area does not have forest habitat.

Finding: Primary causes of decline in old-forest habitats and early-seral habitats are intensive timber harvest and large-scale fir exclusion.

Response: Old-growth forest habitat has not occurred historically and does not presently occur within the Andrews MU/Steens Mountain CMPA subbasin review area.

Finding: Human interactions with wide-ranging carnivores are generally negative and large areas of the basin may not be used by wide-ranging carnivores; because of this, habitats for many riparian dependent terrestrial species, especially shrubland habitats, have declined.

Response: Wide-Ranging carnivores are not prevalent in the Planning Area; therefore, there are no

commensurate elevated levels of herbivores impacting the identified habitat.

Finding: The composition, distribution, and status of fishes within the Planning Area are substantially different than they were historically. Some native fishes have been eliminated from large portions of their historical ranges.

Response: The composition, distribution, and status of fishes within the Planning Area have not substantially changed.

Finding: Wild chinook salmon and steelhead are near extinction in a major part of their remaining distribution.

Response: Chinook salmon and steelhead do not occur in the Andrews MU/Steens Mountain CMPA subbasin review area. No anadromous fish occur in the subbasin review area since only one drainage in the subbasin review area is a tributary to the Columbia River (Wild Cat Creek), and it is an ephemeral stream.

Finding: Development for a growing human population is encroaching on previously undeveloped areas adjacent to lands administered by the Forest Service and the BLM. New development can put stress on the political and physical infrastructure of rural communities, diminish habitat for some wildlife, and increase agency costs to manage fire to protect people and structures.

Response: The Planning Area is sparsely populated and rural; however, it is not experiencing any rapid population growth. The population is stable or declining.

Finding: Agency social and economic policy has emphasized the goal of supporting rural communities, specifically promoting stability in those communities deemed dependent on agency timber harvest and processing. Even-flow of timber sales, timber sale bidding methods, timber export restrictions, and small business set asides of timber sales have been the major policy tools on Forest Service-administered commercial forestlands. Regulation of grazing practices has been important on BLM administered rangelands.

Response: The BLM does not have a social and economic policy.

Finding: Agency social and economic policy has emphasized the goal of supporting rural communities, including tribal communities. The ability of agencies to assist tribal members and tribal communities depends

on the effectiveness of agency land uses and management strategies to positively consider and influence these factors (tribal employment, subsistence, treaty/reserved rights, spiritual, cultural/social purposes).

Response: The BLM does not have a social and economic policy.

Finding: Predictability in timber sale volume from agency lands has been increasingly difficult to achieve. Advancing knowledge of ecosystem processes, changing societal goals, and changing forest conditions has undermined conventional assumptions underlying the quantity and regularity of timber supply from agency lands.

Response: The Planning Area does not have forest habitat and there are no timber sales.

Finding: There is low confidence and trust that American Indian rights and interests are considered when decisions are proposed and made for actions to be taken on BLM administered lands.

Response: The Burns Paiute Tribe is the primary consultation partner for the Planning Area. The BLM has an active relationship with this tribe.

Finding: Indian tribes do not feel that they are involved in the decision-making process commensurate with their legal status. They do not feel that government-to-government consultation is taking place.

Response: The BLM has semi-annual project summary meetings and consultation on all projects in the Planning Area of interest to the tribe.

Finding: Culturally significant species such as anadromous fish and the habitat necessary to support healthy, sustainable, and harvest able populations constitute a major, but not the only, concern. American Indian people have concern for all factors that keep the ecosystem healthy.

Response: The Planning Area does not have and has not historically had anadromous fish and the habitat necessary to support healthy, sustainable, and harvest able populations of anadromous fish.

6.5 Mid-scale Character Description (Resource Area Profile)

The Description of the Mid-scale Character, Step 3 of the subbasin review process, was combined with the RAP of the AMS. Both the RAP and the Mid-scale

Character are descriptions of the existing resources in the subbasin review area as well as their condition and use. The only difference is that the RAP covers all resources in the Planning Area, whereas the Description of the Mid-scale Character is tied to the ICBEMP findings for issue identification. Resources addressed by the findings are described for the subbasin review area as a whole. These include rangelands, woodlands, vegetation, fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, riparian habitats, and human uses and values. Those resources not addressed by the findings are described for the Andrews MU and Steens Mountain CMPA only.

Prior to the meeting of the subbasin review team, the Burns DO staff had begun to prepare mid-scale characterization, by resource, as they pertained to the mid-scale findings and issues for the subbasin review area. This was the next step in the subbasin review process. At the meeting, the group went over the draft characterizations and suggested changes and additions. The current status of each resource pertaining to the findings was described. Management concerns for the resources were identified. A listing of the concerns, by resource, is presented as the issues in Section 6.1.

These management concerns will be used in developing the Management Opportunities chapter of the AMS (Chapter 4) and will also be used in setting priorities and making recommendations as the final step in the subbasin review process. Eventually, this information will feed into the development of alternatives for the RMP/EIS.

The complete descriptions of the mid-scale character are included as Chapter 2 of this AMS.

6.6 Priorities and Recommendations (Management Opportunities)

This is Step 4 of the subbasin review process. This step is analogous to the Management Opportunities step in preparing the AMS. In both cases, management opportunities or management recommendations are identified and priority setting is begun. In the subbasin review, the priorities would set the stage for fine scale, or activity level or project planning; however, in this situation where the subbasin review and AMS are combined, the priority setting is begun at this stage, but is carried forward and refined in preparing the RMP/EIS. After that would come the fine scale planning. The Management Opportunities/Priorities and Recommendations are in Chapter 4 of the AMS document.

The group then examined the mid-scale descriptions of 22 resources of concern. The team discussed the

management concerns pertaining to these resources and “brainstormed” management opportunities and recommendations to address these concerns. This set the stage for the BLM staff to identify management opportunities for all resources to be addressed in the RMP/EIS. See Chapter 4 for Management Opportunities.

6.7 BLM Resource Management Planning Process

During the resource management planning process, the BLM will set priorities for acting on these recommendations and opportunities. Emphasis will be placed on opportunities for protecting and managing special areas such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern; opportunities for management of resources across administrative boundaries such as watersheds, aquatic species, and noxious weeds; and opportunities for control of juniper expansion.

The BLM staff incorporated the descriptions of the mid-scale character and the recommendations into the RAP and management opportunities sections, respectively, of the AMS. The similarities between the subbasin review process and the AMS process are shown in Table 1.1. The integrated priority setting described in the subbasin review for BLM actions will be carried through the RMP.

7 LIST OF PREPARERS

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Evelyn Treiman	Recreation, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Visual Resources, Transportation, Cadastral/Lands/Realty
Matt Obradovich	Wildlife, Special Status Species-Fauna, Wetlands, Animal Damage Control, Wild Horses, Riparian Areas
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8 PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

8.1 BLM Planning Process

The RMP is a land use plan as described in FLPMA. The RMP establishes in a written document the following:

- Land areas for limited, restricted, or exclusive resource uses or for transfer from BLM administration;
- Allowable resource uses and related levels of production or use to be maintained;
- Resource condition goals and objectives to be reached;
- Program constraints and general management practices;
- Identification of specific activity plans required;
- Support actions required to achieve the above;
- General implementation schedule or sequences; and
- Intervals and standards for monitoring the plan to determine its effectiveness.

The underlying goal of the RMP is to provide efficient on-the-ground management of the public lands and associated resources over a period of time, usually up to 20 years. The procedure for preparing a RMP involves nine interrelated actions. These actions and the anticipated timelines for the Andrews MU/Steens Mountain CMPA RMP are outlined in Table 8.1.

8.2 Public Involvement in the Planning Process

The public involvement opportunities for the major stages of the planning process are listed below. Dates for each of these events will be publicized when finalized. Every effort will be made to ensure meaningful public involvement throughout the process, including the use of internet technology.

- Identification of Issues, Planning Criteria, and Management Concern, *Federal Register* Notices of Intent, media articles, and website information regarding the preparation and content of the Plan, and schedule of upcoming scoping meeting will be readily available. E-mail messages or letters will be sent to people on the mailing list. This AMS and subbasin review will be prepared and circulated for public review prior to issuance of the Draft EIS.

The BLM will organize and facilitate informal public open-house scoping meetings to gather public input on

the issues, management concerns to be resolved in the RMP, and on the planning criteria and process. At these meetings, interested parties will have the opportunity to give written comments to the BLM as well as engage in discussion of issues. Requests for written comments on issues/scope of the RMP will be sent out during the public scoping period. Comments on the Draft and Final RMP/EIS will be solicited.

- Formulation of Alternatives/Public Interest

Scoping meetings with interested parties and agencies will be held at several locations in order to solicit comments on alternatives and ensure that all appropriate issues are addressed. Periodic progress reports to interested parties will provide up-to-date information on the RMP/EIS process.

Public input via written responses within the 60-day scoping/comment period will be incorporated into the process where appropriate.

After the scoping period, flyers will be sent to all parties who have expressed interest in the Andrews MU/Steens Mountain CMPA RMP/EIS. At that time, parties can designate their level of interest in the remaining process by returning the flyer to the BLM.

- Issuance of the Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

Public Notice of the availability of the Draft RMP/EIS, *Federal Register* Notices regarding the availability of the Draft RMP/EIS and dates for the 90-day period for public comments will be published in local/regional papers advertising the availability of the Draft RMP/EIS. The schedule of the public meetings to be held during the comment period will be published at this time.

Public meetings will be held locally during the 90-day public comment period to gather written input on the Draft RMP/EIS.

- Issuance of Proposed Final Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

The Final RMP/EIS will be sent to those who commented on the Draft RMP/EIS and/or

- requested a copy. The availability of the Plan will be advertised in regional newspapers, *Federal Register*, and other media. A notice of a 30-day protest period will be published in all appropriate media.
- The Governor's consistency review (60 days) will run concurrently with the 30-day protest period.
- **Response to Protests**

Written responses will be sent to the public as needed.

Federal Register Notice requesting comments on significant changes made as result of a protest will be published if significant changes are warranted.
 - **Issuance of Approved Plan/Record of Decision**

The public will be notified via news articles, e-mail, website, and transmittal letters of the availability of the approved Plan and Records of Decisions.

8.3 Stakeholders List

Major groups of stakeholders have been identified and are listed below. Additional stakeholders will be identified throughout the process. A mailing list identifying key people in these organizations, agencies, and interest groups, as well as individuals will be compiled and maintained throughout the planning process.

Interested public
Special Interest Groups
National, state, and local agencies
Adjacent private landowners
Grazing permittees
Lien holders
Interested businesses and consultants
American Indian Tribal Governments
Search/Rescue groups
Southeast Oregon Resource Advisory Council
Steens Mountain Advisory Council
Media

Table 8.1: Anticipated Timelines for the Andrews Management Unit/Steens Mountain CMPA Resource Management Plan

<u>PLANNING PHASE</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>METHOD/ACTIVITY</u>	<u>DATES</u>
ISSUE, PLANNING CRITERIA IDENTIFICATION	Announce upcoming scoping meetings. Request written comments on issues/scope of RMP/EIS, AMS, subbasin review.	Notice of Intent in <i>Federal Register</i> 30-Day Comment Period	2/02
	Develop mailing list.	Newsletter to names on RMP/EIS mailing list Press release to media	2/02

<u>PLANNING PHASE</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>METHOD/ACTIVITY</u>	<u>DATES</u>
	Explain planning process to public. Solicit issues and concern. Identify scope of RMP/EIS.	Public Meetings in Burns, Frenchglen, Bend, and Portland	2/02
	Explain planning process and consistency requirements to local and state government officials. Identify agency issues and concerns.	Meet with interested groups and organizations	
		Meet with local governments and other agencies	
	Review input from groups showing interest in RMP/EIS.	Public comment period	3/02
	Respond back to the public on issues to be addressed initially. Collect additional data where needed.	News article	
	Describe alternatives that have been developed. Make sure issues are addressed. Assure focus of plan.	Newsletter to public, Plan mailing list	6/02
ALTERNATIVE FORMULATION	Request comments on alternatives.	30-day comment period	
	Obtain comments on content.	Written responses comment period	
	Inform local, state, and federal agencies, interest groups' key people of alternatives.	Meetings and letters	6/02
DRAFT ARA/STEENS MTN CMPA RMP/EIS	Request comment on draft RMP/EIS. Announce upcoming public meetings.	Draft RMP/EIS mailed, 90-day comment period	5/03
		Press release to local and Portland media	
		Notice of Availability in <i>Federal Register</i>	
	Describe components of the Draft RMP/EIS and solicit comments on it.	Public Meetings in Burns, Frenchglen, Bend, and Portland	8/03
	Inform key individuals, agencies, government.	Meetings with groups, key people, government	

<u>PLANNING PHASE</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>METHOD/ACTIVITY</u>	<u>DATES</u>
PROPOSED ARA/STEENS MTN CMPA RMP/FINAL EIS	Obtain comments on Draft RMP/EIS.	Written responses, 90-day comment period	8/03
	Give public opportunity to review proposed decisions and protest decisions if adversely affected.	Publish Proposed RMP/FEIS to public and mail list	12/03
		<i>Federal Register</i> Notice requesting comments	12/03
		Begin 60-day Governor consistency review, include notice explaining protest period (30 days)	12/03
	Opportunity to comment on any significant changes made as result of a protest.		3/04
APPROVED PLAN/ROD		News release	
	Notify public of final decisions.	News Article, Newsletter, transmittal letters	5/04
	Distribute RMP.	Mail approved RMP to RMP/EIS mailing list	
IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE	Document and establish RMP implementation, modification, and monitoring		9/04

Note: Dates listed are completion dates unless so stated.

9 ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern	R&PP	Recreation and Public Purpose
Act	Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000	RTR	Redband Trout Reserve
AML	Appropriate Management Level	SEORMP	Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan
AMR	Appropriate Management Response	SMAC	Steens Mountain Advisory Council
AMS	Analysis of the Management Situation	USC	U.S. Code
AUM	Animal Unit Month	USFS	U.S. Forest Service
APHIS	Agricultural Plant and Animal Health Inspection Service	USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
BLM	Bureau of Land Management	USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations	VRM	Visual Resource Management
CMPA	Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area	WSA	Wilderness Study Area
DO	District Office	WSR	Wild and Scenic River
EA	Environmental Assessment	WJMA	Wildlands Juniper Management Area
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement		
ESA	Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended		
FAR	Functional at Risk		
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act		
GIS	Geographic Information System		
HMA	Herd Management Area		
HUC	Hydrologic Unit Code		
ICBEMP	Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project		
ID	Inter Disciplinary		
IMP	Interim Management Policy		
MFP	Management Framework Plan		
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding		
MU	Management Unit		
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act		
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act of 1966		
ODEQ	Oregon Department of Environmental Quality		
ODFW	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife		
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle		
ORS	Oregon Revised Statute		
PM ₁₀	Particulate matter less than ten micrometers in aerodynamic diameter		
PFC	Proper Functioning Condition		
PVG	Potential Vegetation Group		
RA	Resource Area		
RAC	Resource Advisory Council		
RAP	Resource Area Profile		
RMP	Resource Management Plan		
RNA	Research Natural Area		
ROWs	Rights-of-Way		

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10 GLOSSARY

Allotment – A specific portion of public land allocated for livestock grazing, typically with identifiable or fenced boundaries and permitted for a specified number of livestock

Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) - Step 4 of the BLM's land use planning project. It is a comprehensive documentation of the present conditions of the resources, current management guidance, and opportunities for change.

Animal Unit Month (AUM) – The forage needed to support one cow, one cow/calf pair, one horse, or five sheep for one month. Approximately 800 pounds of forage.

Appropriate Management Level (AML) – The optimum number of wild horses that provides a thriving natural ecological balance on the public range.

Appropriate Management Response (AMR) – Specific actions taken in response to a wildland fire to implement protection and fire use objectives.

Aquifer – Rock or rock formations (often sand, gravel, sandstone, or limestone) that contain or carry groundwater and act as water reservoirs.

Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) – Area where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect humans from natural hazards.

Avoidance Areas – Areas with sensitive resource values where rights-of-way and Land Use Authorizations would be strongly discouraged. Authorizations made in avoidance areas would have to be compatible with the purpose for which the area was designated and not be otherwise feasible outside the avoidance area.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – Government agency with the mandate to manage federal lands under its jurisdiction for multiple uses.

Broad Scale – A large regional area such as a river basin and typically a multi-state area.

Candidate Species – Any species included in the Federal Register Notice of Review that are being considered for listing as threatened or endangered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Consultation – (1) An active, affirmative process that (a) identifies issues and seeks input from appropriate American Indian governments, community groups, and individuals; and (b) considers their interests as a necessary and integral part of the BLM's and Forest Service's decision-making process. The Federal Government has a legal obligation to consult with American Indian Tribes. This legal obligation is based in such laws as NAGPRA, AIRFA, and numerous other Executive Orders and statutes. This legal responsibility is, through consultation, to consider Indian interests and account for those interests in the decision. (3) The term also refers to a requirement under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for Federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or National Marine Fisheries Service with regard to federal actions that may affect listed threatened and endangered species or critical habitat.

Ecosystem – A complete, interacting system of living organisms and the land and water that make up their environment; the home places of all living things, including humans.

Ecosystem Management – The use of a “whole-landscape” approach to achieve multiple-use management of public lands by blending the needs of people and environmental values in such a way that these lands represent diverse, healthy, productive, and sustainable ecosystems.

Endangered Species – Any species defined under the Endangered Species Act as being in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. Listings are published in the Federal Register.

Environmental Assessment (EA) – One type of document prepared by federal agencies in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which portrays the environmental consequences of proposed federal actions which are not expected to have significant impacts on the human environment.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – One type of document prepared by federal agencies in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which portrays the environmental consequences of proposed major federal actions expected to have significant impacts on the human environment.

Ephemeral stream – A stream, or reach of a stream, that flows only in direct response to precipitation. It receives no continuous supply from melting snow or

other source, and its channel is above the water table at all times.

Exclusion Areas – Areas with sensitive resource values where rights-of-way and land use authorizations would not be authorized.

Existing Management Situation (EMS) – Existing Management Situation; a component of the Analysis of the Management Situation; a description of the existing management direction government resource management programs of a Planning Area.

Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) – Law mandating that the BLM manage lands under its jurisdiction for multiple uses. Establishes guidelines for its administration; and provides for the management, protection, development, and enhancement of the public lands, among other provisions.

Fine Scale – A single landscape, such as a watershed or subwatershed.

Fire Management Plan (FMP) – A strategic plan that defines a program to manage wildland and prescribed fires and documents the Fire Management Program in the approved land use plan. The plan is supplemented by operational procedures such as preparedness plans, preplanned dispatch plans, prescribed fire plans and prevention plans.

Fire suppression – All the work activities connected with fire-extinguishing operations, beginning with the discovery and continuing until the fire is completely extinguished.

Functional at Risk (FAR) - Riparian/Wetland areas that are in functional condition but an existing soil, water, or vegetation attribute makes them susceptible to degradation.

Geographic Information System (GIS) – An information processing technology to input, store, manipulate, analyze, and display data; a system of computer maps with corresponding site-specific information that can be combined electronically to provide reports and maps.

Ground water – Water that sinks into the soil and is stored in slowly flowing and slowly renewed underground reservoirs called aquifers.

Habitat – A place that provides seasonal or year-round food, water, shelter, and other environmental conditions

for an organism, community, or population of plants or animals.

Herd – One or more wild horse bands using the same general area.

Herd Management Area (HMA) – A geographic area identified in a Management Framework Plan or Resource Management Plan for the long-term management of a wild horse herd.

Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) – A coding system developed by the U.S. Geological Service to map geographic boundaries of watersheds of various sizes.

Interdisciplinary – Involving more than one discipline or resource management program. Promotes resource management at a plant community, landscape, or ecosystem level.

Interim Management Policy (IMP) – Policy for managing public lands under wilderness review. Section 603(c) of FLPMA states: “During the period of review of such areas and until Congress has determined otherwise, the Secretary shall continue to manage such lands according to his authority under this Act and other applicable law in a manner so as not to impair the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness, subject, however, to the continuation of existing mining and grazing uses and mineral leasing in the manner and degree in which the same was being conducted on the date of approval of this Act: Provided, that, in managing the public lands the Secretary shall by regulation or otherwise take any action required to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands and their resources or to afford environmental protection.”

Interior Columbia River Basin Ecosystem Management Project (ICBEMP) – An on-going project examining the effects (on a large, regional scale) of past and present land use activities on the Interior Columbia River Basin ecosystem and a small part of the Great Basin ecosystem

Land Use Authorizations – Those realty related authorizations such as leases, permits and easements authorized under 43CFR2920 and the R&PP Act. Land use authorizations also include any other authorizations with the exception of rights-of-way (43CFR2800) and Special Recreation Permits (proposed in 43CFR2930) generally contained in 43CFR2000 series of regulations.

Management Concern – Procedures or land-use allocations that do not constitute issues but which are recognized, through the RMP/EIS preparation process,

as needing modification or decision regarding management direction.

Management Framework Plan (MFP) – BLM land use plan, predecessor to the Resource Management Plan (RMP). Older generation of land use plans developed by the BLM. This generation of planning has been replaced by the RMP.

Management Opportunities – A component of the analysis of the management situation; actions or management directions that could be taken to resolve issues or management concerns.

Mineral Estate – Refers to the ownership of minerals at or beneath the surface of the land.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) – Law requiring all federal agencies to evaluate the impacts of proposed major federal actions with respect to their significance on the human environment.

Nonfunctional - Riparian/Wetland areas that clearly are not providing adequate vegetation, land forms, or large woody debris to dissipate stream energy associated with high flows, and thus are not reducing erosion or improving water quality.

Noxious Weed – A plant specified by law as being especially undesirable, troublesome, and difficult to control. A plant species designated by federal or state law as generally possessing one or more of the following characteristics: aggressive and difficult to manage; parasitic; a carrier or host of serious insects or disease; or nonnative, new, or not common to the United States. According to the Federal Noxious Weed Act (PL 93-639), a noxious weed is one that causes disease or has other adverse effects on man or his environment and therefore is detrimental to the agriculture and commerce of the United States and to the public health.

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) – A vehicle that can be operated off of improved and regularly maintained roads with hardened or gravel surfaces.

Prescribed fire – Any fire ignited by management actions to meet specific objectives. A written, approved prescribed fire plan must exist, and NEPA requirements must be met prior to ignition. The introduction of fire to an area under regulated conditions for specific management purposes (usually vegetation manipulation).

Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) – Riparian-wetland areas achieve Proper Functioning Condition

when adequate vegetation, landform, or large woody debris is present to dissipate stream energy associated with high water flows. This thereby reduces erosion and improves water quality; filters sediment, captures bedload, and aids floodplain development; improves floodwater retention and groundwater recharge; develops root masses that stabilize streambanks against cutting action; develops diverse ponding and channel characteristics to provide habitat and water depth, duration, and temperature necessary for fish production, waterfowl breeding, and other uses; and supports greater biodiversity. The functioning condition of riparian-wetland areas is a result of the interaction among geology, soil, water, and vegetation.

Public land – Any land or interest in land owned by the United States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the BLM.

Rangeland – Land on which the potential natural vegetation is predominantly grasses, grasslike plants, forbs, or shrubs suitable for grazing or browsing. It includes natural grasslands, savannas, many wetlands, some deserts, tundras, and areas that support certain forb and shrub communities.

Research Natural Area (RNA) – An area where natural processes predominate and which is preserved for research and education. Under current BLM policy, these areas must meet the relevance and importance criteria of ACECs and are designated as ACECs. An area of significant scientific interest that is designated to protect its resource values for scientific research and study.

Resource Area (RA) – The “on-the-ground” management unit of the BLM comprised of BLM administered land within a specific geographic area.

Resource Area Profile (RAP) – A component of the analysis of the management situations; a description of the current condition, amount, location, use and demands of the natural resources in a Planning Area.

Resource Management Plan (RMP) – Current generation of land use plans developed by the BLM under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. Replaces the older generation Management Framework Plans. Provides long-term (up to 20 years) direction for the management of a particular area of land and its resources, usually corresponding to a BLM resource area.

Right-of-way – A permit or an easement which authorizes the use of public land for certain specified purposes, commonly for pipelines, roads, telephone

lines, electric lines, reservoirs, etc; also, the reference to the land covered by such an easement or permit.

Riparian area – Area with distinctive soil and vegetation between a stream or other body of water and the adjacent upland; includes wetlands and those portions of floodplains and valley bottoms that support riparian vegetation.

Saleable Minerals – High volume, low value mineral resources including common varieties of rock, clay, decorative stone, sand, gravel, and cinder.

Scenic river – A river or section of a river that is free of impoundments and whose shorelines are largely undeveloped but accessible in places by roads.

Scoping – The process of identifying the range of consideration, issues, management concerns, preliminary alternatives, and other components of an environmental impact statement or land-use planning document. It involves both internal and external, or public, involvement.

Sensitive species – Species identified by a Forest Service regional forester or BLM state director for which population viability is a concern either (a) because of significant current or predicted downward trends in population numbers or density, or (b) because of significant current or predicted downward trends in habitat capability that would reduce a species' existing distribution.

Seral – Refers to the sequence of transitional plant communities during succession. Early-seral refers to plants that are present soon after a disturbance or at the beginning of a new successional process (such as seedling or sapling growth stages in a forest); mid-seral in a forest would refer to pole or medium sawtimber growth stages; late- or old-seral refers to plants present during a later stage of plant community succession (such as mature and old forest stages).

Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) – An area where recreation is the principal management objective, where intensive recreation management is needed, and where more than minimal recreation-related investments are required.

Special Status Species – Plant or animal species known or suspected to be limited in distribution, rare or uncommon within a specific area, and/or vulnerable to activities which may affect their survival. Lists of Special Status species are prepared by knowledgeable specialists through the State of Oregon; the BLM

prepares a list of state sensitive species predominantly based on the list prepared biennially by the ONHP.

State Listed Species – Any plant or animal species listed by the State of Oregon as threatened or endangered within the state under ORS 496.004, ORS 498.026, or ORS 564.040.

Subbasin review – An interagency collaborative consideration of resources, resource management issues, and management recommendations for one or more subbasins or watershed drainages approximately 800,000 to 1,000,000 acres in size, equivalent to a 4th-field Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC).

Sustained yield – Maintenance of an annual or regular periodic output of a renewable resource from public land consistent with the principles of multiple use.

Threatened Species – Any plant or animal species defined under the Endangered Species Act as likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. Listings are published in the Federal Register.

Visual Resource Management Classifications -
Class I-The objective of this classification is to preserve the existing character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes and limited management activity. The level of change should be very low and must not attract attention. Class I is assigned to those areas where a management decision has been made to preserve a natural landscape.

Class II-The objective of this classification is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to landscape characteristics should be low. Management activities may be seen but should not attract the attention of a casual observer. Any changes must conform to the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape. This class represents the minimum level of VRM for WSAs.

Class III-The objective of Class III is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. Moderate levels of change are acceptable. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of a casual observer. Changes should conform to the basic elements of the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Class IV-The objective of Class IV is to provide for management activities that require major modification of the landscape. These management activities may dominate the view and become the focus of viewer

attention; however, every effort should be made to minimize the impact of these projects by carefully locating activities, minimizing disturbance, and designing the projects to conform to the characteristic landscape.

Wild River - A river or section of a river that is free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds and shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted.

Withdrawal – Withholding an area of federal land from settlement, sale, location, or entry, under some or all of the general land laws, for the purpose of limiting activities under those laws in order to maintain other public values in the area or reserving the area for a particular public purpose or program; or transferring jurisdiction over an area of federal land, other than “property” governed by the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act, as amended (40U.S.C.472) from one department, bureau, or agency to another department, bureau, or agency.

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